

Here is a new edition — completely revised  
for our day and generation — of this  
standard book on family life

# THE FINE ART OF LIVING TOGETHER

.....

ALBERT W. BEAVEN

Because of its spiritual insight and its practical wisdom this is an ideal book for those just married or contemplating marriage. Thousands of copies of earlier editions have helped young people embark on the great adventure of wedded life.

# The Family Lives Its Religion

By

REGINA WESTCOTT WIEMAN

Here is a book that will go far toward putting religion back into its rightful place in family life. Not the "family altar" pattern of an earlier generation, perhaps, but a modern, twentieth century version of religious living.

Outside interests, crowded schedules, money problems and other conflicts that have shoved religion out the back door of so many homes are here shown to be the very forces that give the family a chance to live its religion. "Creative interaction," this working for the good of all—for the will of God—is the theme of the book.

Dr. Regina Westcott Wieman, lecturer and author, is a consulting psychologist, specializing in problems of individual and family adjustment, and in the field of group counselling. She is the author of *Popularity*, *The Modern Family and the Church*, and (with Henry Nelson Wieman) *Normative Psychology of Religion*.

HARPER & BROTHERS  
*Publishers*





THE FINE ART  
OF  
LIVING TOGETHER

• •





# THE FINE ART OF LIVING TOGETHER

By

A. W. BEAVEN, D.D.

*President, the Colgate-Rochester  
Divinity School*

REVISED EDITION



HARPER & BROTHERS

PUBLISHERS

THE FINE ART OF LIVING TOGETHER

Copyright, 1927 & 1942, by Harper & Brothers  
Printed in the United States of America

. . . Revised Edition . . .

*All rights in this book are reserved.  
No part of the book may be reproduced in any  
manner whatsoever without written permission  
except in the case of brief quotations embodied  
in critical articles and reviews. For information  
address Harper & Brothers*

H-8



This book is complete and unabridged  
in contents, and is manufactured in strict  
conformity with Government regulations  
for saving paper.



• • • FOREWORD • • •

IF AN honest man is the noblest work of heaven, a worthy and happy home is the noblest work of earth. Certain it is that such a home is one of the greatest blessings to the world and to those connected with it. If life in the family circle is satisfactory the members of that home can face almost anything undaunted. If it is unsatisfactory, particularly if it is marked by dissension and strife, everything else in life, for those involved in that strife, is undertaken under a handicap.

The achievement of a satisfactory relationship in home life, therefore, is a consummation worthy of any sacrifice.

It will be admitted at once that it primarily depends upon the two who enter wedlock. No one can produce this desirable result unless they do, and no one else can prevent this result unless they acquiesce.

Therefore, if they can learn "the fine art of living together" so that in their home this glorious objective of a happy and permanent home life can be achieved, they will have gained a great goal. The necessity for their definite attempt to learn it is more urgent today than ever.

The inner ties that bind the home together must

## FOREWORD

be steadily increased these days to offset the decreasing pressure of the forces from without which in years gone by could be relied upon to aid in maintaining the unity of the two in the home relationship. The high walls of a Gothic cathedral, when subjected to the spreading pressure from the roof, placed on them, must be kept in place either by pressure from without as in the case of the flying buttresses often used in Medieval construction, or by some form of tying the walls together from within. If in any given type of construction the pressure from without is withdrawn, more tying power must be added from within.

The modern marriage relationship faces the same problem. Much of the old external pressure is being withdrawn. Economic compulsion which made women tend to remain loyal because it was their only way of support; social compulsion, which threatened them with ostracism if they were divorced; moral compulsion, which exerted the restraint of religious creed and moral teaching; legal compulsion which made divorce almost impossible, these and other outside factors are not as effective today as formerly, in promoting the permanency of the married relationship.

Therefore, if we admit the danger of an unstabilized home life and the value of permanency in that relationship, there is all the greater reason why the

## FOREWORD

two who enter wedlock today should strengthen the inner ties which bind them together.

This development from within, as over against pressure from without has, of course, the great advantage that the two who remain together in wedded life because of these ties are themselves developed and are supremely contented and happy in the home ties. They have stabilized the relationship because they wanted to, not because they were compelled to.

To the writer this current need of modern home life is simply another argument why we should each in our homes stress the value of learning "the fine art of living together," emphasizing the graces of attraction rather than bonds of legal compulsion, and also an argument why any one of us who is in a position to guide youth in forming their ideals should aid them in learning this finest of the fine arts both before and after they embark on the great adventure of wedded life. That this example and ministry is greatly needed no one can deny.

I am no pessimist about the American home, but one does not need to ignore the vast number of happy homes to recognize that there are millions of homes in America today so unsatisfactory that they actually go to pieces under the strain. The proportion of divorces to marriages has increased so fast as to indicate serious trouble.

In addition to those homes that actually come to

## FOREWORD

an open break there are hundreds of thousands more that come near the edge of disruption, and still thousands more that are going on at a small rate of efficiency so far as happiness is concerned.

### UNHAPPY HOMES HURT EVERYBODY

This unsatisfactory solution of the problem of home relationships carries with it heavy penalties for all concerned. The results for husband and wife are too obvious to need comment. Both of them, daily, pay the price of this unhappy situation. Not so many have seen clearly, however, how tremendous is the penalty such a home inflicts upon the children. But common sense will point it out and court records will show that a great deal of juvenile delinquency can be traced directly to these unsatisfactory relations between the parents. Judges emphasize the demoralizing effect on children of the testimony in divorce trials about their parents. Social workers point out how often the children of divorced parents respect neither father nor mother, feel little restraint from either side because each parent embitters the child against the other with the result that a headstrong and willful child is raised to become a danger to society. Mental specialists testify to the number of evil effects that come from the relationship of step-parent when remarriage takes place. The price of home unhappi-

## FOREWORD

ness in terms of blighted childhood is a staggering figure.

Not every one realizes, either, how great is the penalty society faces for conditions of this sort. It has thrown back upon it much of the actual expense that grows out of juvenile delinquency and other evil by-products of parental failure.

No argument would be needed to prove also that strife between the parents in the home must tend to perpetuate itself in future homes founded by their children. Failure in parental co-operation, particularly when resting upon causes that are evidently reasons for suspicion and jealousy, cannot help but send the children out into life with distorted views of what home life should be.

Further, such unhappy homes tend to contaminate the ideals in the circle of friends with which these people move, and thus spread the disease farther and farther through society.

## THEY HINDER THE CHURCH

The stake that the Christian church has in this problem is almost too great to compute. Any pastor or church worker becomes conscious upon contact with life as it is lived that an unhappy home life tends to wreck almost every possibility which the church might otherwise have of maintaining a satisfactory ministry to that home. The kind of ties that would be formed between the parents and the



## FOREWORD

church under normal circumstances, under contentious conditions are almost invariably broken up. If one of the parties remains in the church the other one leaves, or, still worse, both leave when the matter becomes a subject for public discussion. What is true of the parents becomes almost equally true of the children, if they are old enough when public discussion is taking place. Friends of both tend to take sides and unfortunate discussion is engendered.

In addition to this result is another just as real, but not so obvious. Namely, that the spirit of love and good will proclaimed by the Christ, through the church, is so utterly negated in an unhappy and contentious home that the possibility of getting the seed of the Christian message to take root in such a soil is well nigh hopeless.

Still further, if the church is to build into human society the principles of Jesus, unquestionably one of the most natural places for the demonstration of the workability of these principles is in successful Christian homes. To create them, therefore, and to prove that Christ's principles are eminently practical in this relationship is one of the greatest tasks and opportunities of the church. To permit unhappiness to exist without attempting to show how, by Christ's help it can be removed, is to allow a condition to remain that is a constant obstruction to the progress of the Kingdom of God. If Chris-

## FOREWORD

tianity cannot work in a home what argument have we that it will work elsewhere?

## PREVENTION OR CURE

Some have proposed that the church's greatest contribution to the solution of this problem is the creating of more stringent laws which would prevent the possibility of easy divorce. I do not doubt the wisdom and necessity of some uniform divorce law, nor am I saying that the church may not have some very large part to play in creating a better situation along this line than now exists, but it is my contention that the church's opportunity lies primarily along another line.

Prevention is better than cure. It is a far worthier ideal for the church to attempt to prevent unhappiness arising in the home than to give itself primarily to forcing people to live together who are already unhappy in bonds that they have come to resent.

## THE FINE ART OF LIVING TOGETHER

If the Christian church, through the application of the principles of the Christ will show young people who are inaugurating their homes, how to make use of the spirit of Jesus in such a way as to help them learn the art of living together, so that churlishness, misunderstanding and dissension will be avoided, it will undoubtedly be doing

## FOREWORD

a far finer thing than if its representatives stand at a court room door and refuse to couples, who are unhappy, relief from their situation by dissolution of the ties that bind them.

Any thoughtful person must realize that the most difficult problem in the world, anyway, is the problem of human relationships. We can get along well with *things*. We can conquer the water; we go through it, or under it. We can conquer the air; we make its winds drive our ships or bear up our planes. We can harness electricity and make it do our will. We throw stone or concrete into place and it stands for centuries, patiently doing our bidding. We can easily solve our relationships with inanimate matter, but when it comes to solving the problem of our relations with folks we are staggered. Witness the human problem in industry; the part hate and fear play in war, and, for our purpose, note how many men there are who can achieve great success in solving the relations between steel and brick and electricity and steam, and as a result can create a great ship or skyscraper, or bridge, and yet these same men find it utterly impossible to solve the relationships with wife and children.

### A SPECIALIST IN HUMAN RELATIONSHIPS

Fair-minded consideration will force one to

## FOREWORD

admit that no solution for this problem has been offered equal to the one proposed by Jesus Christ. He offers, by creating first of all right relationships with God, to produce such a spirit as will solve the problem of their relationships with each other. Where others suggest force and selfishness as the method to be used He puts forward the ideal of love and service.

He both taught and lived such great concepts as patience, faith, love, good cheer, unselfish strength expressing itself through service, ability to see another's viewpoint, and, above all, the principle of the Golden Rule, and eagerness to see the best in the other. These ideals, and scores of other homely and workable conceptions are unquestionably among the most practical principles that can be adopted if two people are proposing to live together on a satisfactory basis. No other philosophy or religion offers such a complete or practical set of working ideals for learning successfully the art of living happily together in the home as is included in the Christian program. It offers to harness the strength of the Almighty to the tasks of the home's daily life.

The Christian religion not only offers a philosophy and set of principles, but presents in addition to cold instruction, a motive power to achieve this end.

## FOREWORD

### THE CHURCH'S CHANCE

Certainly, in view of the fundamental place of the home in society and in the face of the unhappy homes that do exist, an institution like the Christian church, having for its objective the propagation and application of these principles to all life, must feel a tremendous obligation to place before society, and particularly before young people who are inaugurating homes for themselves, all the help it can. It may thus enable them to live their home lives happily, to build their homes solidly and avoid the pitfalls into which others have fallen.

The Christian pulpit not only has a great obligation at this point, but a great opportunity. It can minister here with almost untold helpfulness. The place to help is before difficulties arise, and not after. If young people can be trained in the right way before they begin their home life they can avoid most of the dangers.

### FIRESIDE SERMONS

It was with these facts in mind that for fourteen years I preached annually, while I was pastor in the Lake Avenue Baptist Church of Rochester, New York, a series of "Fireside Sermons," in which I dealt with the application of the simple, working principles of Jesus to the various problems that



## FOREWORD

arise before and after marriage. Most of the material in this book was presented first in sermon form which naturally accounts for certain emphases which frequently recur. The general field though is an area which the preacher and religious writer need more and more to enter. The experience of these years convinced me that such a course is of increasingly practical value to the community and to the church. It serves humanity where humanity needs service. It builds the homes that make the church.

It has also, in addition to this great and worthy object, many by-products which are almost equal in value. It offers a pastor an opportunity to say many things, from the pulpit, which both the young people and their parents hear which it would be rather embarrassing to say to them if they were seated in his office. More than that, it enables him to reach hundreds, if not thousands, of couples with a helpful message who never would come and sit down to discuss these problems with him. It tends to draw both the young people who are intending to make a home into a relationship to a church, and to the same church.

Still another by-product that is worth while when difficulties do arise, as they often will after the wedding day, is that it makes it easier for young people to come and consult with their minister without embarrassment because they have been

## FOREWORD

conscious that he is interested in their possible difficulties, even before they arise.

### CAPTURING THE HOME FOR CHRISTIAN IDEALISM

It has been my observation, also, that these sermons offer a fine opportunity to present to the young people the Christian ideal, and for enlarging on the sacredness of the vows that are to be taken. The issues that are at stake, the possibilities for happiness or unhappiness in the long years that are ahead form the greatest basis for the demand that the young people take the spirit of Christ as their guide in the enterprise on which they are embarking.

There are those who feel that presentation of matters of this kind year after year must eventually become stale. Undoubtedly it does have something of a sameness for those who are not proposing to get married, or who are not married. But to those who are engaged, or married, let us remember that it is just as new as life itself. There is not a day of married life that does not in some way present the old problems, love, faith, and control of selfish propensities, and each day make a demand for a new answer to the questions as to how to maintain poise in the midst of the day's work, how to be cheerful and brave, how to produce joy and not irritation in the other's life. These, and others of

## FOREWORD

like nature are the very commonplaces of every day. The problem is always there. The proposed solution is always helpful. Love is never old as secular literature. It is the main theme of most stories. Home life embraces almost the whole gamut of human interests. Why should we not deal with these subjects often, if not regularly?

Many pastors who have tried this out will testify to the same experience. I can unite with them, therefore, in urging other pastors to inaugurate the custom of giving a course of sermons on this general subject often enough to offer to their young people the best guidance that they have in the application of Jesus' message to the creation of happy and contented homes. It is with the hope that such presentation by my brethren of the ministry may be stimulated, as well as the hope that these messages may be helpful to home makers, themselves, that this book is written. Because the chances of a happy outcome of life together within wedlock are so profoundly influenced by the great choices that lead up to and later condition wedded life, I have devoted Book I to the period before marriage, and Book II to the experiences of the wedding day and after.

A. W. B.



## • PREFACE TO THE REVISED EDITION •

SINCE this book was first written an immense output of books which deal with marriage has come from the press. These, however, have dealt largely with the physical, sociological, and psychological phases of wedlock and not so much with the utilization of religious values and motives in producing satisfactory home relationships. As this is the chief contribution of the pulpit, and one of the main points of interest for the church, I send out this revised edition, with a feeling that the field of religion and the home life has not been adequately treated even yet. Though I do not contend that this is dealt with here as it should be, I hope that I may have some part in stressing what I consider an *under-emphasized*—but very important side of the home experience.

This book, obviously, is not addressed to the ultra modern or sophisticated youth; to them it will seem passé. My answer is that there is no lack of the more sophisticated literature on this subject today. If that is wanted, it can easily be found. I do not need to compete in that field. I have a certain area marked out for myself by the nature of the book, and the fact that most of the material here presented was at one time preached in a pulpit.



## PREFACE

This is no indication that I think young people approaching the marriage day should not read literature dealing with various sides of married life including the physical. I think they should read some such books, and I commend to them the books of Ernest R. and Gladys H. Groves of the University of North Carolina, especially those entitled "Wholesome Marriage" and "Sex in Marriage."

In the field, though, in which I try to make my contribution, I wish to commend the writings of Dr. L. Foster Wood, Secretary of the Department of Marriage and the Home of the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America. I believe that his department is doing a most constructive piece of work in stressing the relation of religion to the home. The bibliographies prepared by him are the most carefully selected lists of material for the minister, of which I know.

ALBERT W. BEAVEN

# • • • CONTENTS • • •

|                                |             |
|--------------------------------|-------------|
|                                | <i>Page</i> |
| Foreword                       | v           |
| Preface to the Revised Edition | xix         |

## BOOK I

### BEFORE THE WEDDING DAY

#### *Chapter*

|     |                                      |    |
|-----|--------------------------------------|----|
| I   | Early Friendships and Crippled Homes | 3  |
| II  | Real Love Is a Key                   | 11 |
| III | Courtship—A Joke or a Sacrament?     | 20 |
| IV  | Will He Qualify as a Husband?        | 25 |
| V   | Will She Qualify as a Wife?          | 36 |
| VI  | On How Much Can We Marry?            | 44 |
| VII | The Vows to Be Taken                 | 54 |

## BOOK II

### THE WEDDING DAY AND AFTER

|      |                                         |     |
|------|-----------------------------------------|-----|
| VIII | Practicing the "Fine Art" Together      | 61  |
| IX   | "The Little Foxes That Spoil the Vines" | 68  |
| X    | The Problem of the "In Laws"            | 76  |
| XI   | Money—Master or Servant?                | 83  |
| XII  | The Romance of Parenthood               | 93  |
| XIII | Keeping God in Family Life              | 105 |
| XIV  | Can Love Die?                           | 116 |
| XV   | Growing Old Together                    | 124 |
|      | Appendix                                | 130 |
|      | Topics for Sermons                      | 132 |



*BOOK I*

BEFORE THE WEDDING DAY



## *Chapter I*

### EARLY FRIENDSHIPS AND CRIPPLED HOMES

JUST as the strength or weakness of a tree when it is full grown is often determined by conditions in its early days, so the happiness of a home is often determined by events that have transpired in the lives of the two people years before they have met each other.

Some homes have small chance for happiness when they begin, because of the wrong foundation laid in the ideals of the two people even before they thought seriously of love.

No greater mistake could be made by either parents or young people than the idea that the early friendships entered into in school days do not count. Parents are serious sinners along this line at times in joking and twitting the young people about these friendships. This very often tends to cause a break between parents and young people and destroys the sense of mutual confidence that would be of almost incalculable value when the serious choice of a life mate is rising for consideration. But, further, this joking is a mistake in that it strengthens the feeling already held by



## THE FINE ART OF LIVING TOGETHER

many young people that unless they are thinking seriously of wedlock it matters little the type of company they keep or the standards which that company holds.

### THOSE HIGH-SCHOOL "FRIENDSHIPS"

That the friendships made in High School are never matters of indifference and are never unrelated to the happiness of future homes which may be established by the young people, is a conviction that has come to me constantly through the years. The attitude often taken by young men, that they can go with the loose type of girl to have a good time but will choose another kind when they come to marry, is a very dangerous fallacy. In the first place, no two young people beginning to go together can tell what the result will be. Many a young person has allowed himself, or herself, to enter into what admittedly was an unworthy friendship, entered into simply for purposes of a "jolly good time," only to find that later the friendship developed into an emotion that led to wedlock.

In the second place, the ideals of manhood and womanhood that make the foundation for a permanent life attitude are often greatly influenced by these early friendships. If a young man comes to have a cheap idea of womanhood; or if a girl through one of these early experiences comes to

## EARLY FRIENDSHIPS AND CRIPPLED HOMES

have an unhappy or unworthy experience with some young man, her whole attitude toward life may be vitiated. Undoubtedly many of the difficulties that ultimately wreck thousands of homes could, if the truth were known, be traced back to distorted conceptions growing out of careless friendships in early youth, exactly as a doctor often traces a fatal sickness in older years to some forgotten accident of childhood.

Many a lad, acting on this careless, irresponsible basis has allowed himself liberties with some girl with whom he went. He would admit that he would not want to marry that girl himself, without recognizing that in all probability she would be the wife of some other man, if she were not to be his wife; forgetting also that at the very time he was lowering her ideals by his actions it might be that some other man, proceeding on the same basis, was lowering the ideals of the very girl whom he, himself, would later marry. No young man has a right to take liberties in his friendship with any girl which, if taken by another toward the girl who is to become his wife, would undermine the possible happiness of his own future home.

### SOCIAL "RACKETEERS"

In every generation of young people we develop a certain number of folks who attempt to exhibit their independence and right of self-expression by

## THE FINE ART OF LIVING TOGETHER

popularizing that which is daring, if not risqué, in the relationship between young people of high-school age. Almost any young person who reads these lines can point to one or more such persons in the group with which he associates. Particularly are they dangerous when they are leaders in their set.

Take the young man, popular because of money, or force of personality, or social standing, who sells his company practically on the basis that a girl will pay for his favor with the lowering of her ideals. If she will not acquiesce in his demands, he ridicules her, or threatens her with an ostracism from their group, which to a young person is a greater form of danger than loss of money would be to older people. Many times his demands go to the extent of the loss of her own self-respect.

Young men need to bear in mind that a man's virile strength was given him so that he might be a protector of womanhood and childhood. From time immemorial we have measured a man's chivalry by his willingness to sacrifice himself for the protection of his women and we have measured a man's depravity by his use of his strength to beat his women into submission. Society is a unit on what it would say of a young man who would use physical strength to force a woman to do his bidding. But what shall we say of the young man who

## EARLY FRIENDSHIPS AND CRIPPLED HOMES

uses his leadership, popularity, and social position to rob the girls who keep company with him of their modesty, thus lowering their ideals and leaving them far more weakened in their struggle for the things that are finest in life than he ever could have left them by any sort of physical beating? He is a social thug.

We have also developed the same type among the girls: young women who make that young man the butt of ridicule who holds his ideal of womanhood too high to indulge in the dangerous excesses of certain modern social groups: girls who capitalize the sex attractiveness with which they are endowed and the thrills it develops to try to force themselves into the favor of the boys of their clique. One can frequently see such situations which develop into a veritable competition in indecency. Their friendship kills idealism in their young men friends either by the subtle poison of a sneer or the brazen lure of sex attraction.

Young people of this kind are desperately treacherous in their influence. Our decent youth should refuse to be subservient in their social life to this dangerous type of leadership. Young people should take stock and see whether among their so-called friends, they are including those who are lowering, if not wrecking, the things that are finest in the ideals of friendship.

## THE FINE ART OF LIVING TOGETHER

### BUILDERS OR WRECKERS

A more serious question which each young person should ask himself is this: "Am I by my standards an asset or a liability to those with whom I go? Will my actions, if followed by others in my group, lay right foundations for the homes that will be formed in years to come? Or am I exercising my leadership in such a fashion that if homes are based upon my ideals, they will be headed for shipwreck?"

The ease with which bad friends are found raises a natural question which has often been put to me: "Where can we find friends of the right kind?" This, to my mind, is a real challenge to the Christian young people of our day; to their parents, and, particularly, to those responsible for young people's life in the church of Jesus Christ. Certain it is that we need to work out a far more adequate answer to this question than is now being given. Church after church is run in a way to draw older people into its influence but in a way to repel the youth of its community rather than attract them. These same young people seek attraction elsewhere in places of commercial amusement, with the result that the friendships made, instead of being formed among young people with a Christian background, and in an atmosphere of idealism, are often formed in places which have no character forming purpose

## EARLY FRIENDSHIPS AND CRIPPLED HOMES

behind them, and frequently, with those who will tend to pull down—not build up—Christian conceptions. The church has thought in terms of helping individuals. It needs to think in terms of building homes. To do it, it should act in ways that enable Christian young people to meet each other easily, under right auspices. Nor should any church hesitate frankly and honorably to try to meet this need. It is elemental in life.

### A CHANCE FOR GREAT INFLUENCE

Suffer this last word directly to the young people. However parents or other older people may be related to this particular problem, the ones who have to live with the results that have come from the choices made are the young people themselves. I therefore appeal to the high-minded, wholesome, young people of our time to take the finest conceptions of Christian friendships that grow out of the ideals of Jesus the Master, and bring them to bear upon this problem.

We have had too much bad leadership in the social world. The time has come for those who can lead rightly to assert themselves. Queen Victoria achieved much of her high place of regard in the hearts of the people of the last century because she capitalized the growing resentment of people against the social excesses of that age by asserting her leadership toward a higher moral standard in

personal and Court life. The chance for unique leadership in the social life of today will not be open to young people who lead wrongly. Such wrong leading has been done until we are fairly nauseated with it. The opportunity for great leadership along this line now is reserved for the young person who interprets the finest ideals of Jesus in terms of a new chivalry for our day.

Those will be the leaders of a new crusade who can take the ideas of "Friendship" and "Love" and purify them, ennoble them, cut away from them the cheap and tawdry, and glorify them by the ideals of Christ.



## *Chapter II*

### REAL LOVE IS A KEY

WE rightly have a feeling that if a home is founded on love it has the right basis for happiness. Love is an "open sesame" to married joy, we are told. But "How can I be sure that what I feel toward another is real love?" is often the query of puzzled youth as it stands in the presence of some new and compelling emotion. How many times this question is asked with almost life-and-death seriousness attached to it. Hundreds of times has this question risen in my question boxes conducted among young people at the close of my Fireside Sermon series.

How serious the question, and how important to young life is obvious to each one of us. In America the one ideal generally accepted as the basis for marriage is real love between the two people. In some other countries the decision of the parents is taken. In still others, business arrangements are entered into and family considerations count heavily. In America ostensibly we have made the question of love primary. From this point of view then, love is accepted as fundamental.

For still another reason it is exceedingly impor-

tant. Married life involves constantly the most intimate relationship of life. There can be comparatively no secrecy between the parties. Day after day is filled with the closest associations. Without love this becomes an irritation. The very enforced nature of the constant association drives the parties to distraction. But with love it becomes a joy and these intimacies form the basis for the most marvelous comradeship of life. We rightly judge, therefore, that home life depends for its satisfaction upon the reality of love between husband and wife.

Again, *real love* is the only tie strong enough to stand the strain of married life. Paul says, "Love suffers long and keeps kind." No finer tribute to love could be paid than this. To be able to carry the load of the daily work, the burden of the care of little children, to meet the irritations of the day in the average home, and keep smiling and kindly; to rise above life with a poise of soul, these require some great resource. But love can do it Paul says. Listen: "Love is very patient, very kind. Love knows no jealousy; love makes no parade, gives itself no airs, is never rude, never selfish, never irritated, never resentful. Love is never glad when others go wrong, love is gladdened by goodness, always slow to expose, always eager to believe the best, always hopeful, always patient. Love never disappears."\* Can any one describe the kind of love

\* I Cor. 13:4-8 Moffatt translation.

## REAL LOVE IS A KEY

that is needed in home life any better than this or set it forth in finer language? Yes, real love can do it. But it must be *real love*. All this but accentuates the demand that young life puts upon us when it says, "Tell us, then, how we may know when we are really in love."

He would be a wise man who would be able to make answer to this query with absolute exactness, and yet if we were to attempt to formulate an answer we should speak of at least three elements, the physical, mental and spiritual.

### MARKS OF REAL LOVE

First, love does have a physical basis. God has created us so that young people are attracted to each other first of all largely from the physical side. We like the looks of the other party. There are certain physical types that attract each other. One of the early marks of love is the desire to be in the company of the other; a sense of enjoyment when together, a sense of loneliness when away from each other. Undoubtedly with differing temperaments the strength of this physical attraction varies, but we have no hesitancy in saying that no young couple should consider that they have that "real love" on which wedlock can be predicated if they do not feel a sense of pleasure, yes, even exhilaration in the presence of each other. Sex attraction

is a real quality of "real love." This is the physical mark of love.

But there is also the mental side of love. Love is a matter of judgment and choice. It is not blind at all in the sense of inability to utilize its judgment. Love that has no other mark except its tendency to be swept off its feet by physical attraction comes dangerously near being lust. Love that is real must be based upon a certain amount of mental as well as physical compatibility. Emotional attraction that attempts to link up two people who have diametrically opposite mental interests, is offering a shaky foundation for permanent married life. If he wants to stay at home evenings while she wants always to go; if she wants the radio going all the time while he is irritated with its noise; if he is bored to tears by music while she loves it devotedly; if he loves to have friends come in while she wants her home to herself; if she wants to be constantly traveling while he never wants to leave his home city; a situation is created that cannot help but produce difficulty.

True love has in it the element of a glorified friendship. The conception back of the word "pal" indicates an attitude between the two that is one of the wholesome elements in genuine love.

If two people find that they can play together, that they both enjoy the out of doors, flowers, birds, beauty, books, poetry, the same kind of

## REAL LOVE IS A KEY

friends, they have assets which are very important in starting a home. It might be easy to convey the idea that people to be happy must be absolutely congenial in tastes. This of course can never be so; yet love must have a surer and broader foundation than mere friendship, and certainly friendship, to last long, must have a real basis in mutuality of mental equipment and life interests.

### THE SPIRITUAL ELEMENT IN LOVE

There is a third mark of real love. Just as in our natures there is a mixture of the physical, the mental and spiritual, so real love has its roots in these three sections of our natures. In some ways spiritual compatibility has more to do with the permanence of the love relationship than either of the other bases that have been mentioned. Love usually is noted first in the zone of physical attraction. It evidences its possibility of permanence when it discovers or develops a substantial likeness of mental interests, but it vindicates itself in the presence of its greatest test when the two find a mutuality of spiritual fellowship.

Love, so-called, that involves repression of the highest spiritual expressions is a love that is going to start under a tremendous handicap. Love should really set these finer spiritual possibilities free. Married life has for its greatest undertaking the readjustment of two separate personalities to a relation-

ship that will enable those lives to develop to their fullest, not as individuals but by mutual contributions. They twain shall no longer be two, but one, said the Scripture, and this is the highest objective of the home in the real sense. This merging of the two personalities into a grander whole is primarily a spiritual evolution. Unquestionably the forces that aid this process do exist in part in the lower zone of the physical and the mental, but they have their supreme function in the spiritual area, and there can be no question that the love that does rise to capitalize the merging possibilities in the spiritual zone is a love that has found its highest and finest experience.

Let us find an illustration in religion. One of the great contributions of the Christian way of life is its measure of success in making individuals submerge their selfish and individual peculiarities in such a way as to enable them to live peaceably and happily with others. Christianity accomplishes this by bringing the individuals under a united loyalty to the ideals of Jesus in daily life. By being drawn toward a common center they are drawn toward each other. Insofar as human beings have actually responded to this spiritual power it has proved the mightiest solvent of the ills of selfishness.

If humanity in general finds its greatest aid for submerging selfishness and promoting harmony be-

## REAL LOVE IS A KEY

tween individuals and groups in the spiritual zone, it would seem natural to expect that there might be found in this same zone the greatest aid to two people who are attempting to perform what is the most difficult and delicate of all operations; namely, the harmonizing of two personalities in the intimate readjustments of home life. Love that cannot build its "ties that bind" in the realm of the spiritual is poor indeed. Few assets could be greater in starting life together than a common attitude of love and reverence toward God and a loyalty to the ideals of human relationship which Jesus taught. As the spokes of a wheel come closer together as they come nearer the hub, so the personalities and souls of two who are in love come into more perfect harmony with each other when they mutually draw nearer to God.

If in married life there is compatibility on this plane, if, when the two approach that which is the highest and holiest, they find themselves growing closer together, they are then particularly equipped to find some of life's greatest experiences in love and home life.

There are still other reasons for this. Love that is real has for each of us an element of the sacred about it. Seldom, if ever, have I talked with young couples between whom real love existed without their expressing the feeling that they had been drawn closer to God through their love for each



## THE FINE ART OF LIVING TOGETHER

other. It is one of the commonest experiences of a minister's life to find the whole emotional side of religion in young people stimulated to new activity and development with the coming of genuine human love. Again, when young people are planning a home there is a sense of high adventure that naturally makes them seek the guidance and blessing of God. This adventure is touched with glory when the two have a sense of holy relationship to that marvelous personality of the Christ.

### "LOVE SEEKS NOT ITS OWN"

A fourth element of real love should be mentioned. The real emotion is marked by an unselfish attitude toward the one who is loved. Selfishness is a mark of the spurious when it is related to love. If you are asking yourself whether the feeling which you have is real love, try to see whether the first thing you are thinking about is what you are going to get out of it, or what you can give. If the former, if the big thing is the money, or the position, or the security, or something else for yourself, then you may question whether your love is adequate. Real love creates a protective and unselfish and helpful attitude.

This is not a bad test to apply to the other's emotions. If a man's general attitude toward the girl is selfish; if he demands his own way; demands that she constantly give in; that she yield her ideals to

## REAL LOVE IS A KEY

come to his standards, she may well question the reality of the thing he offers as his love for her. Or if a man finds the girl who professes to love him interested primarily in the good times he can give or the money he can spend, he may naturally raise the question whether she has in her heart the kind of a love that will offer a worthy basis for a satisfactory home relationship.

To sum up. It is clear that in the love on which wedlock can be safely based there is first an element of mutual attraction for each other on the physical side, but such an attraction alone is not an adequate ground for judging that real love is present. In addition to this should be a good measure of mutuality of mental interest. In the third place, they should inspire in each other the highest and finest spiritual development. And, finally, if the emotion that they feel drives each of them to seek, not the selfish ends to be gained by the individual, but the serving spirit which creates a sense of obligation and protection for the other, we may well say that most of the great marks of real love are in evidence.

### *Chapter III*

## COURTSHIP—A JOKE OR A SACRAMENT?

THE hope of a happy home life together depends, as we know, on the two folks involved and the attitude they take toward each other. Courtship gives a chance for this attitude to evidence itself. If the attitude is wrong it would be better for all concerned if the home were never started. We should like here to put a halo around this experience of courtship and make it so serious that the frivolous and profane would hesitate before going on. Courtship should be a kind of "Holy place" in which we stand before entering the "Holy of Holies" of the home. If no mood of seriousness impresses us in courtship we had better not go farther lest we find the door of the inner sanctuary closed to us. And where else should the note of almost sacred seriousness be more appropriate?

The experience of love-making is one of the most important experiences in which human personalities are ever involved. It is one of the most dominating of all our interests. Even the motives of hunger or the preservation of life itself hardly surpass love as a great driving force in human experience. Among all races of people appearing in his-

## COURTSHIP—A JOKE OR A SACRAMENT?

tory the mating instinct has afforded a primary interest. If we believe in God and believe that He created us and endowed us with the instincts and interests that we find so generally evident, no one of us can doubt how deeply interested He must be in our worthy use of this love element of life with which He has equipped us. Surely, therefore, if human beings need to, and can, expect guidance and help from their Creator in any experience of life, they certainly need to seek that guidance and obtain that help in this matter of proper mating, for all subsequent life is tremendously affected by the choice made at this time.

### SAMSON VERSUS JACOB

It is depressing to any thoughtful person when a light or frivolous attitude is taken by young people toward courtship. In Scripture two great contrasting courtships stand out. One is the courtship of Samson in which he looked upon a girl, was favorably impressed with her physical attractiveness and said with impetuous insistence to his parents: "Get her for me." The tragic results of that ill-considered courtship are familiar to every reader of the Bible. The contrasting courtship that stands over against this is the courtship of Jacob and Rachel. The patient, judicial and high-minded purpose that is evident in Jacob's attitude rises to a high level for any age, and no words in any litera-

ture bear evidence of any higher plane to which love-making can be carried than is indicated in those words of Scripture: "And Jacob served seven years for Rachel; and they seemed unto him but a few days, for the love he had to her" (Gen. 29:20). A love that was so deep that it made her memory, after her death, a constant inspiration in his life. When, at last, he came toward the sunset and evening star his mind turned back and he passed again in memory by the oak where in years gone by he had buried her. Even when he was giving his final blessing to his sons he paused in the midst of that solemn ceremony and paid his tribute to Rachel's affection that had blessed him even after she had gone.

If more courtships could be carried on in the spirit of Jacob and Rachel we would have fewer wrecked homes and broken hearts today. It is the attitude of Samson that has always brought its penalty. It has its counterpart today. We see a young man enamored with a pretty face, or feeling a thrill upon the dance floor; or a young woman enchanted with his big car, or the fact that he is a fine dancer, and they decide post-haste that these form an adequate basis for rushing to get married. That is a flimsy foundation upon which to start a home. Can we be surprised that such marriages go to pieces sometimes almost before they get well started? No wonder society is being forced to make

## COURTSHIP—A JOKE OR A SACRAMENT?

couples think over what they are doing when they wish to marry, by demanding that some time elapse between the taking out of the license and the performing of the ceremony. In Los Angeles County where such a law was put into effect, in one year, more than twelve hundred of the couples who took out licenses to marry decided not to do so when they had time to think it over.

A doughboy overseas told me that he had married a little French girl because when billeted in their home in France she had been so nice to him when he had been sick that he felt he had to do something for her and, not having any money to give her, made up his mind that he should marry her and he did. No wonder our divorce courts have been busy cleaning up the wreckage of such actions. And yet the reason put forward by this doughboy as a basis for marriage was soundness itself compared with some of the excuses given by others here. A man, twenty-four years old, apparently in sound mind, came to me at one time to see if I could help him find an attorney who could help him annul a marriage that he had contracted only two months before. When asked why he had contracted it he said that he had met the girl one afternoon and she looked so pretty he asked her to take a ride. He had spent all his ready cash on taxicab fares taking her around the parks. After they had finished the ride she suggested that they

get married. He hated to disappoint her, so they went and got a license and got married.

One wonders how much this light and trashy attitude toward the marriage relationship is the product of our movies, our cheap novels, magazines and newspapers. May it not grow, too, out of utterly unworthy ideals of courtship and wedlock created by the conversation of older people and the joking and twitting of married people? Would to God something might be said that would make young America realize that no enterprise is more genuinely sacred than courtship nor should any other experience be entered upon with a more earnest desire that the parties associated with it be guided by Divine wisdom and not merely transient human impulse.



## *Chapter IV*

### WILL HE QUALIFY AS A HUSBAND?

WHETHER we learn the fine art of living together naturally depends a great deal upon the person we expect to live with. It would be almost impossible to live happily with some people. It is entirely possible with some others. The time to try to find which one of these groups the other person belongs to is before and not after the minister has pronounced the benediction after the ceremony. The young woman must look for good husband material; the young man for good wife material. Let us first take up the young woman's side of the problem.

How can a young woman tell whether a young man who seeks her hand has in him the qualifications that will make a good husband? The creating of a happy and successful home means, of course, a great deal to both parties involved; but in a very real sense it means more to the woman than to the man. He will be out among folks, meeting them constantly in his daily task. She will be confined in the house. Often for days at a time he will be almost her entire contact with the outside world. She gives up her name for him. In some cases she is to leave

a home where an adequate income is assured, where through years she has experienced love, protection and support, to begin an experiment in home-making, living on an income that is not always sure, living oftentimes among conditions that are utterly novel, and facing limitations that are often discouraging. No wonder a girl asks herself, and she has a right to ask, whether he will be able to do his part.

There is no rule of the thumb by which anyone can tell, in a given case, whether "he" is the right man for a certain girl. The heart, the head, and the soul of the girl herself, guided by the greatest wisdom that can be given her by God Almighty, must be the final court of appeal. But there are certain questions which she might ask and, if she will answer them honestly, she may be helped to recognize the things in him that will probably make him a good husband. These questions suggest certain values that might be looked for in a suitor. The more of these suggested values that he possesses the more chances she has that, insofar as he can make it, the outcome of life together will be a happy one.

First, is he a man near her own age? Undoubtedly happy homes have been built where a great discrepancy exists between ages, but, by and large, the natural thing is for the man to be some three or four years older than the woman. There are both physical and mental reasons for this. The

## WILL HE QUALIFY AS A HUSBAND?

necessary burden of readjustment is at its lowest when these are the relative ages. The farther from this ideal the ages go the heavier the burden upon the two in their readjustment of personalities.

### IS HE A MAN?

Is he a real man, not a mannequin? Is he simply a "ladies' man" or do men admire and respect him? Is he of the type which one has described as "a fellow who wears a goatee instead of a chin"? Be careful about a man whom the men do not like or respect. Is he a man who is physically well, and is he strong of body? Plenty of women have married men who were not well and have still been happy, but no one can doubt that physical ill health in the breadwinner of the family unquestionably places a tremendous strain upon home happiness.

### CLEAN BLOOD

Is he morally clean? Has he lived the kind of a life that will bring him to the marriage altar free from physical taint? There have been many figures published to show what a large proportion of men there are who have not considered the single standard binding upon them. No girl can afford to ignore the fact that she, as a wife and mother, will be the greatest sufferer from any possible venereal disease which her husband brings as the results of wrong acts in his past.

## THE FINE ART OF LIVING TOGETHER

We may thank God that an ever-increasing number of men are recognizing the perfectly natural right of the girl to expect that the man will not only come to the marriage relationship as clean morally as she is, but that he will present to her or to her parents, without request on their part, a certificate of health from a thoroughly reputable physician. The man who takes the initiative on this himself will have very greatly undergirded the confidence and respect that all parties concerned will have in him.

The terrible results for their families that come from previous wrong living on the part of men are too well known today to need emphasis here, and certainly no girl needs to feel any hesitation in taking any necessary step to make herself absolutely sure that the man who proposes himself as her husband is a man who has not sacrificed his right to her respect or jeopardized the finest right of his possible children to a clean and wholesome physical heritage.

### CAN HE THINK?

Is he a man with active mental life? In this day when figures show the value, financially as well as otherwise, of a high-school or college education a girl might naturally ask, "Has he a good education?" But it should be borne in mind that not all those who have gone to college are necessarily edu-

## WILL HE QUALIFY AS A HUSBAND?

cated, and not all those who have not gone to college are necessarily without the elements of an education. Has he an active mind? Does he still study? Does he have mental ambition? Does he indicate in his interests and conversation and reading a real mental activity or does the limit of his mental power seem to be reached when he has traced his favorite hero in the funny sheet of the newspaper or has learned the batting average of some Bush League star? Is his mental rating about equal to that indicated by the comment on a certain young man made by a friend of mine who said: "If that young man's brains were made of dynamite and they blew up it would not even muss his hair."

## FAMILY HERITAGE?

Another serious question which a girl might well ask is this: "What is his family background?" "Have his parents been happy in their home life?" It is true a girl does not marry his family, but in ninety-nine cases out of one hundred she will have much to do with his family before she gets through, and she can tell a very great deal about what his attitude toward her will be by the attitude that his father has taken toward his mother or the attitude that he takes toward his mother and his sisters. A man's attitude toward the woman in his home who is his wife will undoubtedly be greatly affected by the attitude taken by the men toward the women in

the home in which he has been raised. The study of heredity has added vastly to our knowledge of the assets which each of the pair brings to the new home. It would be worth any girl's careful study to inquire into the laws of heredity and to weigh them when she is asking the question: "Will he make a good husband?"

Is he afraid of hard work? Can he hold a position? Is he among that group that is constantly changing and always "because of the fault of another person"? Beware of the man who is always looking for an easy place and is constantly making excuses as to why he cannot make good on this or that task. Some men's idea of a job is well expressed by the tramp who said he "wanted to get a job in a hothouse picking flowers off from a century plant."

Does he have ambition? I would far rather a daughter of mine should marry a penniless young man of natural ability with education and ambition than marry a man, no matter how much money he had inherited, who had no large plans for his life and no initiative or ambition. Is he a spendthrift? Can he earn money and save it? Has he tastes of which you will be proud or is he a boor with manners that are crude and rough? A girl would need to judge how much external crudities were the result of lack of opportunities and how much they were the native expression of a boorish personality and a heart inherently uncultured.

## WILL HE QUALIFY AS A HUSBAND?

### CHARACTER

Has he a character that one can respect? One of the greatest delusions that afflict young women in this whole matter is the idea that character is a matter of indifference or, if it counts, that he will reform after marriage because of the love he bears his wife. Indeed some girls seem to count wild oats an asset, as though the man were simply exhibiting tendencies instead of forming destructive habit patterns. There is no doubt that love thrives on respect and confidence. There is no question, either, that when respect leaves love tends to follow. But respect and confidence depend upon character. When a woman cannot believe what her husband says; when she questions in her mind what he does when she is absent from him; when she is wondering whether old habits or old affections may be coming back to supplant the affection that he has professed for her; when she begins to realize that his method of life is such that it makes other people doubt his honor, there is going to be placed a strain upon her affection that is exceedingly heavy.

Character is in a real sense the binding quality in human society. Moral idealism is to society what cement is to concrete. As cement intermingles between the particles of sand and stone and gravel in the mixture of concrete and creates a permanent relationship between the particles that enables the



concrete foundation to stand the weight of the building placed upon it, so moral character in individuals, by establishing confidence and dependability in the mutual interrelationships of people, makes a substructure upon which human society can be permanently stable. If this is true of society as a whole it is infinitely more true in the intimate relationship of the home, and the young woman who feels that character in the man she is to marry is a matter of indifference is building her home upon the sand. Looking lightly upon habits of gambling, or drinking, or sharp practices, or those less obvious sins of the spirit, such as churlishness, evil temper, selfishness, and cruelty as not important, is but sowing the wind with the absolute certainty that the harvest will be the whirlwind. Probably nine-tenths of the unhappiness of the home grows out of moral lapses by either one or the other of the parties. To ignore this element would be folly.

It should be said too at this point that the average young woman who is raising the question in her own mind as to a man's character qualifications might very easily find an answer by remembering whether he has presumed in their friendship to take it for granted that because of her possible love for him she would permit the lowering of her ideals or allow carelessness in moral things. More girls

## WILL HE QUALIFY AS A HUSBAND?

have suffered themselves to give over their high ideals in matters affecting their moral code because of protestations of love than under any other circumstances.

## DOES RELIGION COUNT?

Is he a man with an honest and usable Christian faith? This is not to ask whether he has all the items of an orthodox creed, or even whether he adheres to all the forms usually associated with external religion; but does he have a vital faith in Jesus Christ in such a way that it makes him seek to live his daily life in a patient, humble, unselfish, brave way, such as the Master Himself practiced? There are those today who take the high and mighty attitude on this matter of religion as though it were a matter of concern only to the church or the minister but a matter of entire indifference so far as the young people themselves are concerned. But it ought not to take any thoughtful person long to decide what the contrasting results on life will be if, on the one hand, a man takes an attitude of indifference toward God and carelessness in regard to the claims of the Master, or if, on the other hand, he makes a steady attempt to motivate the actions of each day with the spirit of the Gracious Nazarene. If a man can say, "Oh yeah" to the idea of God, he will soon say it to the many

## THE FINE ART OF LIVING TOGETHER

other values related to God, such as truth, dependability, and real worth.

### WOMEN DO NOT HAVE TO MARRY

Will he make a good husband? Women have a right to ask this more today than ever before. There was a time when the only self-respecting realm open to a woman was married life. That time is long passed. Ofttimes, today, women can support themselves just as well as they will be supported if married. They do not need to accept any man who proposes in order to give them either a sense of independence or to save them from the old-time feeling of having failed in life if they are unmarried. The sooner men realize this the better it will be for them and womankind. Women have a new independence hitherto unknown.

Indeed it is worthy of noting here that a recognition of a certain independence on the part of each is as real a value after marriage as before it. Each member of the pair may be strong in his or her own right in order to make a strong home. Uniting two weak people will not make them strong. Each must accept the responsibility of maintaining his own life with moral strength, poise and inner completeness, and each must realize the other's right to moments of meditation and solitude, if desired, for just such strengthening.

As this affects the judgment which a young

## WILL HE QUALIFY AS A HUSBAND?

woman might make about a prospective husband, she might do well to judge whether the ideas of marriage which he holds involve such a possessiveness or dominance that no room is left for her own rights or the development of her own personality.

## *Chapter V*

### WILL SHE QUALIFY AS A WIFE?

WHILE the young woman is questioning in her mind whether he will do his part as a husband, undoubtedly the young man is raising the similar question whether she will make a good wife. It is a wise question to raise. The vow itself is "for better or worse." The right time to try to make sure that it will be for better and not for worse is while the opportunity for judgment is still open. If it is true that a woman is decidedly dependent upon her husband for the conditions which come to her in their home life, it is no less true that a man's whole life is vitally affected by the woman. Indeed, many a man's career out in the world has been made, or wrecked, by the woman he chose as his wife. "Woman is either a prayer from heaven or a howl from hell."

Someone has pointed out that practically all the great plays of Shakespeare represent the ruin that man has wrought and the recovery that woman has brought. In twelve novels of Sir Walter Scott it is the man who brings in sin; it is woman who brings in salvation. Millions of men will testify to the tremendous effect that the choice of the right, or

## WILL SHE QUALIFY AS A WIFE?

wrong, woman has had upon life. The right one, as an Old Testament writer puts it, "will do him good and not evil all the days of her life." It would be unwise to attempt to give any exhaustive catalogue of the qualifications of a good wife. Some questions, such as were suggested to the woman might, however, well be suggested to the man. Among these questions we would list the following:—What is the quality of her personality, will she accept responsibility and go on through with things? Is she adjustable and can she change her role in life and still be happy? Is she self-centered so she must have her own way or "not play"? Does she have common sense or is she obsessed with theories which may not be practical? These and other questions might be asked, questions which go to the deeper qualities of temperament.

## IS SHE HEALTHY?

Is she healthy and strong? When the emotion of love is stirring in the heart of a man his tendency is to feel that it can override all limitations. That real love can do so has been proved over and over again. But if the marriage relationship is to be entered into with ill health on the part of either husband or wife, the two should recognize at the beginning how heavy the handicap will be and definite allowance should be made for it from the start. A woman's health affects not only her own life, but

## THE FINE ART OF LIVING TOGETHER

the lives of her children, and it affects almost every moment of her husband's life in his home and in his entire outlook on life itself.

What is her attitude toward home life? Is home from her point of view a place to go from or a place of opportunity? The idea of marriage frequently in evidence today, where the woman plans to go on with her career and turn the management of her home over to a housekeeper, may seem natural as a phase of the modern philosophy of self-expression, or desirable for financial reasons, but it should be thought of as the exception and not the rule. The creating of a real home atmosphere, the development of the character and personality of all the members of the family, including herself; these are the unique functions of the woman, if she does not do these things no one else can. The man who marries a woman who cannot see a major vocation for herself within her home is missing the possibilities of one of the rare values of home life.

### CAN SHE COOK?

Has she gifts or training in domestic art? If not, is she willing to develop those skills? This is not to ignore the fact that in some few homes there will be money enough so that a woman does not need to cook, or sew, or actually to use her time to take care of the house, but proportionately the number of such cases is few. The lofty attitude taken by



## WILL SHE QUALIFY AS A WIFE?

many young men today toward these homely arts and the feeling that because a girl can sing beautifully, or knows how to dress wonderfully, or has social gifts, therefore, in these she has an adequate equipment for the making of a home, are both ways of blinding one's eyes to the facts. The so-called "Charlotte Russe" girl, largely made up of whipped cream, sponge cake and spiced flavors may make a good impression at a dance, but comparatively few of the hours of married life are spent at such gatherings. Far more of married life is spent looking at each other over the breakfast table, or in the humdrum of simple and ordinary house-keeping than in the thrills of social entertainments. These different gifts are not substitutes for one another.

Is she attractive to children? Beware of the girl who is not loved by children. If children bore her something is lacking. Her very love of childhood is a mark of a personality that has the maternal instinct. Here the question could and should be raised about her family. Especially can a man ask a reasonable question about her mother. By a natural law of life a girl tends to reproduce in herself the point of view that her mother has had. Over and over again one sees the temperament and experiences of the mother express themselves in the daughter when she comes to the same age. Again, what she has done in the parental home she

will tend to do in her own home. No better suggestion can be given to any young man along this line than that he make opportunity, if possible, to get acquainted with the girl in her own home; to see the way she acts toward, and talks to, her mother and her brothers and sisters; the sort of temperament that she exhibits there; the way she dresses around the house, particularly the way she keeps her room or the part of the house for which she is responsible. The way she acts and talks in the home of her parents will probably be the general way she will act and talk in his home if he marries her.

What kind of education and tastes does she have? If a man delights in a great oratorio, but she is nauseated by anything stronger than cheap music; if he loves a great play, but she cannot stand more than vaudeville, there will be a constantly recurring tendency to misunderstanding that will come up every time the question rises: "Where shall we go this evening?"

Has she common sense? No article is of more practical value in the home in either husband or wife than this simple ingredient of common sense. Someone has said: "Most of life is sense, not incense." Certain it is that the essential qualifications for home-making do not consist in the ability to flatter, nor depend upon the external arts of pleasantries, helpful as these may be, but upon the quality of common sense used in dealing with ordinary things.

## WILL SHE QUALIFY AS A WIFE?

### CAN SHE LAUGH?

What is her temperament? Is she gloomy and pessimistic? Does she worry and fret, or can she keep poised and cheerful? Has she a sense of humor, and does she tend to be optimistic? Every home is subjected frequently to periods of strain. Times of sickness come, reverses descend on us, the job is lost, or hardships of different kinds come; the man whose wife at such a time can keep good cheer and help him to rise above his own disappointment, believe in himself again, and go back into the fight with new courage, is a man who has a treasure far greater than gold.

Will she be willing to start with you where you are and build up slowly and naturally to that position which you hold as your goal? Can she live within your income or will she demand from the very beginning that you support her on a basis out of harmony with what you earn? Unhappy is that man who marries an "automobile wife" on a "bicycle salary," or whose wife insists that in order to "keep up with the Joneses" they must spend what they do not have.

### DOES SHE USE GOD'S HELP?

Has she a real, vital, working religion? No single element that enters into the making of home life is greater than the spirit of two people who form the partnership. The greatest source for that spirit

undoubtedly is in God. Paul points out that practice can produce what he called "The fruits of the spirit," which are "love, joy, peace, long suffering, kindness, meekness and self-control." The Christian religion offers these great contributions to human society for its home-makers. These graces of the Christian life are to be practiced of course equally by both the man and the woman. It is not out of point here, however, to indicate how anomalous a condition is presented when today a woman is opposed to or indifferent to the teaching and example of Christ. Christianity has elevated womanhood to a place of almost supreme opportunity. Someone has said that as in Dante's great work the hero's advance toward paradise is measured by the new beauty which he could see in the face of the heroine, so Christian manhood has marked its advance toward God by the new glory it has been able to discover in its womanhood. One of the marks of the divine in Christianity is the high honor given by Christian men to women. Insofar as the men accept the principles and spirit of Jesus they hold women in a high and splendid honor; insofar as they repudiate Jesus and His ideals, they tend to lower themselves toward that animal relationship that falls back upon their own brute passions and strength. Womanhood's protection depends upon how honestly men are Christian. This being true, when a woman repudiates Christ she repudiates

## WILL SHE QUALIFY AS A WIFE?

the greatest source of her own protection. The man who marries a woman who is indifferent to or skeptical about the Master is marrying a woman who is an inherent contradiction and who has cut herself off from one of the greatest inspirations toward gracious, high-minded womanhood and motherhood that the human race has ever known anything about. The Christless woman is, in a real sense, an anomaly. Will she make a good wife? If she is a genuine Christian she certainly has at least one of the great qualifications.

## *Chapter VI*

### ON HOW MUCH CAN WE MARRY?

A NATURAL question frequently asked by young people is this: "How much must he earn before we can get married?" More correctly stated, this chapter heading should be, "On how little can we marry?" or "How much should we have saved?"

The uncertainty of employment for youth in the industrial conditions since 1929 has raised a deeper question, "Can we ever have the financial security which warrants marriage?" Many young people have postponed marriage waiting for some mythical day of certainty.

To answer the question in this chapter heading offhand, in terms of so much a week, would be to miss many of the main points to be considered. It has been stated that in one of the Federal Reserve Banks the head of the institution did not consider that any man was earning enough to warrant his getting married unless he was receiving \$1500 a year. This answer would vary in different parts of the country and would be different in rural sections and in the city.

## ON HOW MUCH CAN WE MARRY?

### HOW MUCH IS HE WORTH?

A far larger question, however, than the one about the actual present income is the one about the real prospects that the young man has of an increasingly satisfactory income as the years pass. Does he have the initiative, ambition, the determination to adjust, to acquire new skills, and find a way in spite of difficulties? Admitted that many a good man does not succeed even with these qualities, nevertheless, they seem more important than ever to success in present competition. What habits has he? How long has he kept his job? What is the firm's attitude toward him? What is his attitude toward the firm? Still further, what are his assets in terms of preparation? An education in college or professional school doesn't guarantee success, but in general, it is true the better the preparation the farther a man can go, and the man who has "gone through" his preparation has values to fall back on that are of no small account.

A girl might be far wiser from a financial point of view to marry a man now getting \$25 or \$30 a week who had "hidden assets" of the type mentioned, than some man getting \$50 a week who has already reached his maximum. If a young woman is willing to marry a man who is young, well prepared, ambitious, hard working, and who does not consider himself so wise that he cannot learn a



## THE FINE ART OF LIVING TOGETHER

great deal more, she will find that it is not too difficult to begin on a modest scale, but there is a steadily increasing satisfaction which will come with the rising family income. A man once said he would rather have his daughter marry a man who was worth \$100,000 and didn't have a cent than a man who had \$100,000 and wasn't worth a cent.

One of the hard experiences in any home is adjusting itself to a decreased income. It is hard to go down, but immensely satisfactory to go up, financially speaking. The gradual acquisition of the things that represent desires long held but only at last achieved is a joy almost beyond description. Particularly is this true if the achievements are the result of the mutual planning and sacrificing of the two partners in the home.

### CAN HE SAVE?

Another element that might enter into the estimate of the young man by both the young woman and her parents is the habit of saving which he may have acquired. The *amount* of money he may have saved is not of such moment in the long run as is the habit that he has thus learned. A man who has demonstrated that he can make a long range saving and insurance program has shown that he possesses one of the most valuable financial habits, and one that can be the foundation for independence in

## ON HOW MUCH CAN WE MARRY?

the years to come. If a young man, before he marries, cannot live within his income and save something, it requires some faith to believe that he will earn enough more or will revamp his own expenses enough to enable the two of them to live within what he can earn after they are married. This is not to ignore entirely however the new incentive for saving that a home induces.

## WHAT WILL SHE SPEND?

The answer to the question at the head of this chapter is almost universally couched in the terms already discussed about the man's earning capacity. Not often, however, do we come in view of as frank a facing of the part that a woman has in the financing of the home. Mothers are wont to teach their daughters that a young man who has plenty of money, or who earns plenty, is a good financial capture. But many of the mothers who insist on these qualifications in a young man do not train their daughters to realize that the financial rocks that wreck homes are struck not alone because a man may be a *poor earner* but because the woman is an *unwise spender*. Financial independence for the future home does not depend on how much it takes in but upon the difference between what it takes in and what it spends. Take it by and large, most of the money spent in ordinary homes is dispensed by

the wife. If she has not been taught the value of the dollar, if she does not know how to purchase good things for the money she expends; if she has not learned how to judge her income and live within it, no matter how much he has or can earn, she can keep him driven to desperation. When a father says to a young man who is his prospective son-in-law, "How much do you earn?" the son-in-law, after the question is answered, might well inquire, "How wisely can she spend?" Both questions are pertinent.

If a man is seriously raising the question as to how much he should earn before he looks forward to marriage let him frankly face the tastes that his prospective wife has and her own expressed willingness and shown ability to cut her garment according to her cloth. There really is no limit to what a young woman can spend if she wants to. It was vigorously contended in a New York Court by a woman who was suing for alimony that no woman could dress decently on less than \$100,000 a year. While few of the folks who would read this book would have any such wild idea of the amount of money needed for certain expenditures, the principle underlying the remark is evidence that the amount that can be expended is not indicated half so much by actual need as it is by the ability of the spender to arrange expenditures so that they come within the income.

## ON HOW MUCH CAN WE MARRY?

### WHAT CAN SHE DO?

Still another element in the answer to the question at the head of the chapter grows out of the ability of the woman to save money by the things that she can do. If she has taste and ability in dress-making and can make her own hats; if she is handy with the needle or in a score of other ways can help in saving the family income, it would make a great deal of difference in the amount on which a couple could marry.

Thousands of young women do not recognize today that in the old-fashioned home, while the woman did not go out to earn her own living, she worked at home and constantly reduced the outgo of the family purse by the things she did within the house. She spun the yarn, she made the clothing, she cured the meat, she preserved the fruit, she tended the chickens, took charge of the garden, sometimes even milked the cows and made the butter. Most of the money was spent by the man. A woman, under the older plan, certainly did *earn* a genuine income whether she *received* it or not. Today we have moved away from the old situation in two directions. In the first place, a woman ordinarily actually produces less that saves the family income, but also, because of our quickened conscience as to fair division of the money earned by

## THE FINE ART OF LIVING TOGETHER

the man, she not only produces less herself but dictates more than she once did how the money he earns shall be spent. This latter tendency is one that we all must commend, but no one should fail to recognize that a better division of the money does not necessarily produce more money; this can only actually be accomplished if the two earn it, or if the woman knows how to save it. It is this art of wise spending and saving that is one of the greatest qualifications that a woman can have for successful home management. If more mothers who spend money teaching their daughters to dance and to acquire the arts of feminine attractiveness could recognize that far greater necessity of teaching their daughters the art of managing a home and a method of conserving the home resources, we should have fewer men driven to desperation by the harassing pressure of debt.

### LET'S LIVE WITH THE FOLKS!

There are two solutions to this problem of an insufficient income which many young Americans are prone to take, against which we want to protest vigorously. The first solution is that they shall go ahead and get married and live with their parents. Though we shall deal with this later, yet in this work we strongly urge the unwisdom of this solution. If the young woman is to be asked to

## ON HOW MUCH CAN WE MARRY?

start her own home she should not have to be constantly repressed into a mold of a home already started. One of the greatest lessons of mating can be learned from nature. A bird that will not build its own nest and insists on living in a nest belonging to another bird is universally despised. The nesting instinct whereby the two build their own nest is one of the loveliest accompaniments of mating in nature. There is some fair counterpart of this instinct in human nature and it should not be ignored.

## SHALL THEY BOTH WORK?

Another solution which more and more young people are adopting is that they shall go ahead and get married and both work. We can approve of this only as a temporary expedient. It is not the American ideal of a home, and in spite of conditions that sometimes seem to make it almost a necessity, and in spite of arguments with which we are familiar, we raise our voice in protest. The difficulty with this solution is that it prevents a girl from giving herself to what is her primary opportunity and obligation, the making of a new home. It tends to set the new home up on a scale indicated by two incomes, with a consequent demand for reducing the scale of living when the necessity arises for her to remain at home. Usually this very readjustment in

the scale of living is forced upon them when the first babe comes, at the very time when, by the nature of the case, new expenses are arising and the girl is least in the frame of mind to take easily to readjustments of expenditure downward. Another great argument against both working is the temptation to postpone, and sometimes even to avoid, parenthood.

The problem of financing any American home today with the high costs and uncertainty of employment is almost always a serious one. We do not ignore how particularly serious it is for the young couple starting out on a small income, but we cannot help but believe that, in the long run, the home to be built will rest on a more solid foundation if they plan to live on his income alone, the girl fulfilling her obligation by careful management and study of the art of making the greatest use of the things they are able to afford. We have studied a number of homes conducted on a very small income but supplemented by managing ability and taste on the part of the woman. We have contrasted these with other homes with ample money but not supplemented by the same careful management or good taste. We are convinced that in actual home values a woman can earn more by developing her ability to manage and save within the home than by going outside and earning while



## ON HOW MUCH CAN WE MARRY?

these home talents lie dormant. The American ideal of a man supporting the home, and the woman exercising her talents within the home is, we believe, still the norm to be departed from regretfully and for as short a time as necessary.

## *Chapter VII*

### THE VOWS TO BE TAKEN

WHENEVER two young people stand before me to speak their wedding vows I am always deeply impressed with the far-reaching nature of the contract into which they enter. There are four great events in the march of the soul in its relation to earth. Birth, when that life starts. Conversion, when that life is deliberately, by personal choice, submitted to God's purpose. Marriage, when two lives are united to form a home, and death, when the soul passes from this earthly experience. This age is called an irreligious age, and yet it is a tribute to the consciousness of the need of God in great moments that people so universally turn to ministers of God at those crises. In birth they turn for the dedication of the child. In seeking God they turn to the minister for guidance. In death they seek his consolation in the funeral service, and in wedlock both instinct and custom turn the great mass of young people to the presence of the clergymen. Whenever I perform the ceremony I breathe an unspoken prayer that some word of mine shall make the young people realize the important nature of the obligation involved.

## THE VOWS TO BE TAKEN

### WHAT EACH CONTRIBUTES

It would be hard to overstate the seriousness of the step from any angle. Certainly this is true from the point of view of the parents. They are turning over their child to become the supreme possession of someone else, their child upon whom they have invested much in terms of finance, to say nothing of their great investment of love and hope and prayer. From first place they step into second place in the life of the child. It is this that so often mingles tears with joy at the marriage altar. If there is any time when the young people themselves should be tender and considerate of the feelings of their parents it is at such a time. This is what makes elopement an act of ingratitude that is particularly hard for parents to bear.

From the standpoint of the girl it is a tremendous step from a home that is certain to one that is yet to be made. From those who have understood her, sheltered her for years and provided for her want, she goes to a love that is comparatively new and an association that is yet unproven. She gives up her name and gives over to his name whatever reputation she may have achieved. She so links herself to another that if he does wrong she suffers with him. She promises to follow him to the ends of the earth; to depend upon him for support; to receive from him a love so great that for it she will leave father

## THE FINE ART OF LIVING TOGETHER

and mother, brother and sister, and this not for a short time, not for a day or a week, but for life.

From a man's point of view it is a serious step simply as a financial proposition. He enters into a contract, not as he would elsewhere for five days a week, eight hours a day, but for all the week, and for all the hours of the day; not for a time that can be terminated by a few days' notice but "till death do us part." He offers her his name. He obligates himself to support her as long as she lives. She can spend his money, run him into debt, drive him to desperation. Much of his comfort and practically all that his home can mean to him depend on her. Into her hands he is to put the shaping of the ideals of his children. She determines in large measure whether he has two hells, or two heavens, one here and one hereafter.

## INVITE THE MASTER

It is probably fortunate that young people cannot see the entire seriousness of the step that they take, for in all probability if they could see all that was involved many of them would hesitate to take it. But we want here to point out enough of the magnitude of the obligations involved to make those who read this realize that it is a step that should not be taken without a feeling that it is worthy of God's blessing. It is my constant insistence where I have the opportunity to speak in private with young peo-

## THE VOWS TO BE TAKEN

ple who are to be married that they shall consciously take their vows, not simply in the presence of each other and of witnesses, but in the presence of God Himself. I urge that they consider Him a party to the contract and realize that they are adding to the sacredness of the obligation which they assume because of their mutual love, the obligations that they assume because their vows are taken in the presence of Almighty God. There is, I believe some such idea in the mind of the average couple who choose to be married by a minister instead of a Justice of the Peace.

It is one of our loveliest customs that at the time of the wedding we invite in as guests those nearest and dearest to us that they may be partakers with us of that moment in life that crowds so much of the planning of the past and the promises of the future into a few moments of time. Around that moment when the troth is plighted we have woven life's fondest romances. We have surrounded it with a halo. We have filled it with poetry and it is right that we should, for is there anything on earth more beautiful than that moment when a splendid young man in the full glory of his manhood plights the sure and pure love of his heart to a girl who is worthy of him and who in turn places in his keeping the deepest love of her heart?

But we would close this chapter with the suggestion that no invitation list should be considered

## THE FINE ART OF LIVING TOGETHER

complete that could not include the name of the Master among the invited guests. To young couples who can come to that important moment of wedlock assured in advance that "The Unseen Presence" shall be a constant guest in their home there has been vouchsafed the finest blessing that can rest upon the human habitation.

*BOOK II*

THE WEDDING DAY AND AFTER





## *Chapter VIII*

### PRACTICING THE "FINE ART" TOGETHER

LIFE's greatest joy is reserved for the couple who learn the fine art of living happily with others. That it can be learned millions of people have proven; that many have not learned it millions of broken hearts testify. The ideal place to practice it and the most necessary place to use it is in wedlock.

The idea that love professed at the marriage altar will automatically solve all the difficulties between two people has been responsible for more heartache than anyone can compute. The fact is that all people who have ever been married have had their differences, and if they really learn the art of living together they have had to make readjustments that cost. The words spoken at the marriage altar do not change folks; they simply establish a new relationship. But in that relationship the two people have the strongest known human aid in solving the problem of their adjustments; namely, that marvelous emotion that we call love.

Each couple should face the fact that they will have some differences of opinion. The question is not whether they will have these differences, but

## THE FINE ART OF LIVING TOGETHER

what they will do with them when they come. These can either be a source of irritation and permanent trouble, if handled unwisely, or, if handled wisely, they can be an open doorway into a better understanding of each other. Nowhere does the advantage of a genuine Christian spirit come more into evidence.

At one time I sent out a questionnaire to over seven hundred and fifty couples whom I had united in marriage. In answer to the question: "What, in your judgment, is the greatest element making for happiness in home life?" the largest number said: "Religion lived daily in the home." By definition in the questionnaire this involved those attitudes and practices in daily living which grow out of an honest desire to be Christian in deed as well as word. Such religion enables the couple to build a machinery that will actually change differences of opinion into assets. Let us see the situation as it stands when the differences which are common to family life occur. Ordinarily, the different point of view is taken because of different training or different desires, and it is not a satisfactory solution of the situation for one to be able to force the other to come to his or her point of view.

### WHEN BOTH LOSE

Let us realize at the outset that the real objective in married life is not to have the man or the

## PRACTICING THE "FINE ART" TOGETHER

woman "the boss," nor to have one do all the giving in while the other always has his or her own way. If either one always forces the other to give in in a contest of opinions then both have lost. The art of living together is learned when each sees the other's point of view and respects it. The ultimate decision must come after a consideration that has given both a fair deal. Otherwise, even though the one seems to win, the quarrel still stands there and will remain in the heart of the one who gave in, to cause bitterness and heartache. This will produce an explosion later.

## WHEN DIFFERENCES HELP

No difference is solved permanently unless it is solved rightly. This is why religion is so practically helpful. The Christian religion includes the insistence that whatever we would that other people should do to us we should do that very thing to them. The Christian ideal insists that we try fairly to see the other's point of view. It demands that we should settle things, not by resorting to force, either that form of force known as stubbornness or force shown in the ability to wear the other down by talking and nagging, or the use of any other of the weapons of human autocracy, but it insists that the primary question is this: "What is right and fair and just?" The machinery that will enable two

people to agree as to what is fair and to accept it is a valuable mechanism for any home.

Nor is such machinery hard to create. Suppose two people who love each other have something over which hard feeling has arisen. It will only make matters worse to discuss it before others, or even to discuss it when they are tired or irritated. Let them make it a point to say as little as possible in public but reserve for the quiet of their own room a full and frank discussion. If that conversation can be conducted in the mood described in the fifth to the eleventh verses of the thirteenth chapter of First Corinthians, we doubt whether any quarrel could long survive.

One part of this machinery for dealing with the whole matter of differences of opinion is an understanding of the psychology of argument. In any argument, while the first person is speaking the second person is so busy thinking what he will say in rebuttal that he almost never fully listens to the other's point of view. Argument usually strengthens each in his own opinion and closes the mind to the other's reasoning. Really extended argument between married couples seldom settles anything. As a substitute let us suggest this method. In the quiet of their own room let one state fully his or her own point of view without interruption, and then let the other one have a chance to speak his or her point of view just as fully and without interruption.

## PRACTICING THE "FINE ART" TOGETHER

In this way the real ends to be gained can more easily be seen because each can fairly get a view into the other person's feelings and can clearly see what is behind the difference. It is no uncommon experience for any one of us to find under such conditions that what we interpreted to be stubbornness was genuine contention for values that it would have been tragic for both to lose. Such a method as this enables both to pick out what is worth while in the two points of view and save it and usually the part that is unworthy is seen in equally true perspective. This is using religion in a practical way.

## THE SCHOOL OF LOVE

What a tragedy it is when people fail to realize early in married life that the thing which counts most is the ability to make each other happy. It makes little difference how many other girls a man can be pleasant to and interest; if he cannot interest his own wife and make her happy the other things count little. It makes little difference how attractive a girl can be out in company, or how fascinating she is to others, if at home she constantly says and does things that irritate her husband and keeps the atmosphere of the home one of contention and faultfinding, she is a failure as a wife.

The art of living together is an art that must be learned. If it is worth while for a girl to study to become a stenographer or a teacher or for a man to

prepare to be a salesman or a doctor, is it not worth while to discipline ourselves and by determined effort to learn this art of living with each other happily? The first two or three years of married life can have no objective finer than the learning of this art. If it is learned the machinery for taking care of all sorts of difficulties has been erected and can be used. If it has not been learned one matter after the other that has been argued about comes to be taboo because whenever it is touched hard feeling is engendered. In some homes into which one goes there are things by the score that can hardly be mentioned without creating a tension. Differences of opinion arise, quarrels follow, these are not settled, they are hung up as it were on the walls of the room, ready to be taken down and used as the excuse for a new controversy whenever anybody mentions them. No home that we can go into is more unhappy for the two who constitute it, or the friends who visit it, than the one that has no machinery set up for taking care of its differences of opinion. Explosions take place in public, hard words and pent-up feelings are always breaking forth and it is no wonder that under strains of this kind living together ultimately becomes impossible. The man spends long years in preparation for his life work that he may be able to properly support his home. The girl often takes a course in domestic science that she may know how



## PRACTICING THE "FINE ART" TOGETHER

to take care of the home. Why should not every couple definitely and consistently take a course in the art of living together happily, taught by that majestic Teacher, the Christ? Surely any two people who love each other and will give Him and His spirit a fair chance in their lives can become adepts in this gentle art of creating a happy home life.

## Chapter IX

### "THE LITTLE FOXES THAT SPOIL THE VINES"

WHILE every home has its particular problems for adjustment there are certain things that married people have to face that are so common that we feel it worth while commenting upon some of them. We have asked hundreds of couples what causes unhappiness in the home and this answer stands out first, *selfishness*. It is only fair to say that the home is not the only place where this is the cause for unhappiness, but because it is universally a plague to humanity elsewhere it is not surprising that this is true in the home. Determination to have one's own way; attempting to make the other do what we want as over against what he wants; how constantly these things show themselves in some form in the home life, and always accompanied with bad results.

Failure to maintain after wedlock the little courtesies that are commonplace before is another common source of irritation. How many men there are who on the dance floor will jump to pick up a handkerchief for a pretty girl, but at home these same men will let their wives carry out the ashes.

## “THE LITTLE FOXES THAT SPOIL THE VINES”

How many women there are who will spend days in preparation and sacrifice much in order to be well gowned when they go out to a social affair who will not take the trouble to dress for breakfast and will appear in a slovenly kimono or patter around the house in carpet slippers even though they know this to be an aggravation to the husband. If good manners and courtesy are worth anything to us as a means of commending us to anybody, they should be worth most as a means of commending us to the one whom we profess to love best. Good manners are, in a sense, the oil that prevents friction with others. It stands to reason, therefore, that where the most constant contact is the most oil should be used.

### THE TONE OF VOICE

The tone of voice is a thing that should be studied carefully by many a married couple. We have often noticed how people use one tone of voice when speaking to friends or to strangers and another tone when talking inside the home. We have heard men who were salesmen use a tone, when talking with a customer, that was persuasiveness personified, but the same man in speaking to his wife used a tone that would empty the store in five minutes if used with customers. We have heard women who can use a *Vox Angelica* stop on their voices in a social gathering but when they speak

## THE FINE ART OF LIVING TOGETHER

to their children their voices rasp and jangle in a way that sounds metallic. There is the "bored" tone, the "martyr" tone, the "I told you so" tone, the "bossy" tone and the "Uriah Heep" tone and a score of other stops on the vocal organ any one of them calculated to drive the other to exasperation. What an asset in a home is a quiet, modulated voice. It may fairly be said, however, that the cause for this is not found in voice culture but in a treatment for the heart, for it "is out of the abundance of the heart that the mouth speaketh." The heart that is distraught and filled with hard feeling and bitterness creates a harsh voice. If any suffer from the kind of voice described above let them seek its cure from the Lord of the heart.

### APPRECIATION

Another snag that is sometimes struck by the bark of married life is the failure to express the love and appreciation that is due. We take it for granted, oftentimes, that of course the other knows our love. Men too often assume that because they work and earn the money and bring it home they are doing their entire duty. When will we learn that if in addition to the things we are forced to do by the demands of life we could add a little more because we want to we would thus more than double the enrichment of living. This is what the Master meant when He said: "Whosoever compel

“THE LITTLE FOXES THAT SPOIL THE VINES”

thee to go a mile, go with him twain.” Some things we have to do. This is the first mile. Then there are things we cannot be forced to do. We do them because we love to and want to. That is the second mile. Many a man will find that he can buy more happiness and joy for his home for the same amount of money in the shops along life’s road in the second mile than he can ever get in the first mile.

In the days of my boyhood my father and mother knew what very grave hardships were. We knew sometimes what it meant to be very near genuine poverty, yet I can recall how whole days of life in our home were glorified and even the hardships seemed light because of Father’s graciousness. Often early in the morning he would go out and find the most beautiful rosebud in the rose garden, and put it at Mother’s place to greet her when she came to breakfast. It cost only a few moments of time and a heart full of love, but when he stepped behind her chair as she picked up that rose, and gave her his morning kiss the whole day was glorified and even the child that had gotten out of bed “on the wrong side” and came downstairs in the mood to quarrel felt ashamed because life had been touched by the beauty of love expressed in a gracious way.

The smile with which a woman meets her husband when he comes home from a hard day’s work, when things have gone wrong; the kiss which she

gives him and the fond word of greeting are things that can make the hardship of a business disappointment drop away from a man as he might cut off a stone and drop it into the depths of the sea. A word of appreciation to a mother, tired after a hard day's work and the strain of a multitude of irritations that are incident to the care of the home and the rearing of children, will make her burden a thousand times lighter. We find it so easy to complain when things go wrong; let us learn also the art of the gentle word of appreciation when things go right.

There is a world of philosophy in the story of the mother who came to her pastor with a broken heart and gave as her reason that she had been justly rebuked by her little girl. "You know," she said to her pastor, "how often she says and does things that irritate me and how often I have to rebuke her, and I have not been slow in my criticisms, but I noticed that today she had not done a single thing to irritate me. When I tucked her in bed and gave her her good night kiss and started downstairs I was surprised to hear her sobbing, and turning back, I found her little head buried in the pillow and her body shaking with her crying. When I asked her why she cried, she said between her sobs, 'Haven't I been a pretty good girl today?' That question," said the mother, "went through my heart like a knife. I had been quick

## “THE LITTLE FOXES THAT SPOIL THE VINES”

enough to correct her when she had done the thing that was wrong, but when all day long she had tried to so conduct herself that she would not do a thing that irritated me I had put her to bed with her usual kiss but had spoken no word of appreciation.” Many others beside that mother get far behind in their words of kindness. It is this very lack of appreciation between husband and wife that often causes a heartache that is so unnecessary.

### HOW BIG IS A FAULT?

One might make a long list of the things that can be, and so often are, a source of irritation. No home can escape having some of them. No two people who ever lived were perfect nor should it be a surprise to any young man to find faults in his “angel”; he may be equally sure that she will find them in him. Again let us say that it is not so much whether we do find them as it is what we do with them when we discover them. It is entirely possible for a man who finds a fault in his wife to put so much emphasis on that fact in his talking and thinking that he does actually obliterate from his mind the ninety-five per cent in which she is splendid, because of the five per cent in which she is faulty.

We knew a man who harped so much on the fact that his wife could not cook as well as his mother that he seemed to forget that she was a marvelous



mother, a splendid housekeeper, a charming personality, a gracious and beautiful woman, and one who would bring credit to any home. We know of a woman whose husband does not hang up his clothes as he should. It is unquestionably a fault he could and should change, but she has harped on it, nagged him in regard to it, talked of it in public and in private until she has well nigh come to believe, herself, that that one fault is so big as to make him almost unfit to be her husband. She ignores the fact that he is honest and honorable and a good provider; that he is getting ahead in his business and has the confidence of his fellow men, that he is gentle and kindly in the home and in almost every way is a good husband.

Some people focus so much on faults that they cannot see life's glory. It is possible to take a penny and so put it over your eye that you shut out the great mountain or the beautiful landscape. For most of us life is a question of where we put our main emphasis. If all we can focus on is the faults of others, we will miss much of the fullness and the glory of life. Let us get it clearly in the mind that each one who has lived has had some fault; that it requires no brains or genius on our part to be able to find them; that the art in life is to be able to do in part what God Almighty has to do constantly—overlook faults, go ahead and be happy in spite of the weaknesses of others. This does not mean that

## “THE LITTLE FOXES THAT SPOIL THE VINES”

no honest attempt should be made by one or the other, or both, of the two people in the home to correct the faults that both have, but it does mean that for most of us happiness lies along the path of being able to see fairly and in the proper proportion the finest things in the other's personality and to weigh these at their full value. This was the essence of Jesus' great revelation in regard to humanity. Most of us are staggered, even yet, by the marvelous personalities He developed out of people like Peter and James and John and Paul, simply because He could overlook some of their faults and enlarge on their virtues. They ultimately came to be what He believed they could be. He has shown the trail for us in the home, let us follow it.

## *Chapter X*

### THE PROBLEM OF THE "IN-LAWS"

THE mother-in-law has been the butt of constant joking. She is supposed to be the source of irritation and heartbreak in the home. The people who have seen impartially, however, are conscious that this joking has been carried to a foolish extent. Some of the loveliest blessings that ever come to one in a home come through the parents of the opposite party. How many there are who could bear testimony of this.

However, it is perfectly true that one of the most delicate problems in any new home is presented when they are deciding the relationship that the new home unit shall sustain to the homes from which they came. Even if all the people concerned are ideal in their attitudes and determined not to cause misunderstanding the very nature of the relationship creates a complicated situation. The mother of the son often tends to feel that hardly any girl could be worthy of him. The mother of the girl tends equally to feel that no man could be good enough for her. Many times the things in a man in which he differs from the girl are largely the product of his home training. This is equally

## THE PROBLEM OF THE "IN-LAWS"

true of her. Therefore, in beginning their adjustments arguments arise that are very often brought about by the very things that represent the peculiar contributions of his or her home.

### THEY SHOULD LIVE ALONE

The vexed question as to whether they shall live with their parents is raised over and over again by young people in starting their home. We realize how often the necessity for doing so seems imperative. In spite of this the conviction grows that only the most serious reasons should be considered as sufficient for adopting this plan, particularly in the early days of married life. The reasons for this conviction might be summed up as follows:—

First, the adjustment of the two lives that have been individually lived up to that time is always a difficult and delicate process. To make the adjustments satisfactorily each should have free play to meet the viewpoint of the other fairly. The home, to be satisfactory, must reach its own conclusions as a result of mutual contributions. Differences of opinion are bound to arise. If these differences must be debated in the presence of a third party or parties the proper solution is very often almost prevented. When that third party is the parent of either one it is almost impossible for him or her to avoid taking sides on the contested issue; or if the father or mother is able to avoid taking sides it is

## THE FINE ART OF LIVING TOGETHER

difficult for the young people not to feel under certain limitations and restraint because of the extra person.

Another reason why the situation is complicated rises because ordinarily the parents represent the things in which the young people differ, not the things in which they unite. The new home must be a home of its own. The new couple must represent a mingling of their two personalities. The stepping in of the parents on either side represents not both but one side of the contribution brought by the young people. For these and other reasons we advise young people in almost every case to start their lives alone, however modestly it seems necessary for them to begin.

### HE CAN LOVE BOTH

And unfortunately this problem of the in-laws is not all solved even when the two families occupy different houses. There is still to be settled the relationship between the new and the old homes. Sometimes a man is forced into a situation where he apparently has to choose between his wife and his mother. The shifting of the first allegiance from the old home to the new is always delicate. The attitude of the man toward the mother and the wife must be decided. Nothing is much more unfortunate than to have that issue forced early and it is an unwholesome and unhappy thing for the

## THE PROBLEM OF THE "IN-LAWS"

wife or mother who brings it into the foreground. Both women should try their best to see that it does not rise as an issue. If the question has to be answered we have Jesus' own words, "For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother and shall cleave to his wife." But the proper solution lies in the recognition that the love a man bears his wife is different than the love he bears his mother and he can love them both supremely and honor both of them by the completeness of the love, which in its own way he bears each of them. Yet there are mothers who seem jealous of the new daughter-in-law. We have seen them indulge in picayune criticism of the girl's housekeeping, of her method of cooking, of the way she dressed. We have even known a mother-in-law to go so far as to deliberately attempt to estrange a son from his own wife, all of this almost criminal procedure being largely the outgrowth of pure jealousy.

On the other hand we have seen a girl who took the attitude that she did not even want her husband to visit his mother and who deliberately set herself to try to break down certain ideals instilled by that mother, and to definitely oppose things that were counted of particularly large import in the old home. Too strong condemnation could hardly be expressed for either course of procedure. In the long run, nothing can mean more to the normal mother than the permanent happiness of the home

## THE FINE ART OF LIVING TOGETHER

into which the son or daughter goes, and any mother must recognize that to be happy the home must be free to establish its customs without undue pressure from without. Any girl should recognize that if there are things about her husband that she loves, in all probability the very best things he has have come from his mother. If a wife forces her husband to repudiate his mother something is likely to happen to the man that is as unfortunate for the wife as for the mother.

The wiser attitude to be taken by the young folks is a recognition that there are definite and different contributions in customs, ideals, traditions and culture that come from the two different homes. Both of these are to be as definitely conserved as the good name or the money that is inherited. Each should be as eager to conserve the values from the other's home as from his own.

Above all things the two women concerned must realize the danger and destructiveness of a jealous attitude. In its stead there must be substituted the spirit of co-operation. If the girl will be eager to learn from his mother all the arts that she used to create contentment and happiness in his heart, and if the mother, in turn, can bear in mind her own experiences as a bride and build in the heart of her son the most abiding loyalty for the new "first lady," then out of such co-operation will be pro-



## THE PROBLEM OF THE "IN-LAWS"

duced another of those happy relationships that will be a source of constant blessing to both homes.

### A CHANCE TO BE CHRISTIAN

No one should deal with this subject without recognizing, however, that there are a great many situations where either because of the widowhood of the mother or on account of sickness, or old age, or other reasons beyond human control, one or more of the parents must live in the home with the young people. Where a condition of this kind is not a matter of choice but a matter of necessity there are certain things that need to be borne in mind. The obligation to our parents is one of the deepest in life and if a situation has arisen where they are dependent for care or support on the young people both the laws of God and man unite in saying that this should be met fairly and honorably and cheerfully. "Honor thy father and mother" is the word that has been written by God into the heart, as well as written in the law, of nation after nation, and God's blessing is promised with its fulfillment.

The young people need to recognize that probably nothing can be more embarrassing or difficult for the older folks than a sense of their dependence, and that few situations can offer a more splendid opportunity for the display of Christian grace on

both sides. God pity the home which is forced to become the residence of two separate families that cannot bring to the solution of the normal problems that will rise out of such conditions the assistance of the Christian spirit.

## *Chapter XI*

### MONEY—MASTER OR SERVANT?

MONEY is a great servant, but a poor master. The old writer said: "They that will be rich will fall into divers temptations" or, in other words, those that set their hearts on money and make it the big end of life will get confused on life's real values.

This is shown every day. The person who has a great life purpose can use money and make it a blessing to himself and others, but the person who makes money his main aim often ruins himself in getting the money, and what is even more tragic, in the process of getting the money he loses the ability to enjoy it after he once has it. It is not at all an uncommon thing to see a man acquire the habit of money-getting to such an extent that he cannot stop to enjoy what he has. He drives steadily on with his further getting until he goes into the grave leaving the money, often for others to waste or to quarrel about.

In home after home, money is one of the causes of constant irritation and one of the greatest causes for misunderstanding. But here, as elsewhere, there is in the teaching of the Master a principle that is a key to the proper solution. The

## THE FINE ART OF LIVING TOGETHER

Master's point of view affords a perspective in which we see money as a servant and not as a master.

According to the Master we are here for a great purpose, the bringing in of God's Kingdom on earth, and all the things which come into our hands are means to that end. This puts God first and money second. In that relationship money is safe. When money is put first, it becomes dangerous. This fact of life is important everywhere, but it is in the relation of money to the home that it has an exceedingly important bearing.

### MONEY AND HAPPINESS

Take its relation to the amount of a man's income. If money is the important thing, then happiness is made to turn on it. If someone else gets more, then the wife nags at the husband and the husband is jealous of the more successful competitor. But if any one thing is clear in home life, it is that happiness is not dependent on the amount of the income of the home. We are far from saying that more money cannot purchase more things that bring comfort and convenience, and therefore, increases happiness in that sense, but I am pointing out the obvious fact that rich people are not necessarily happy in their homes, and poor people are not, of necessity, unhappy. Indeed, one wonders sometimes whether the reverse may not be nearer

## MONEY—MASTER OR SERVANT?

the truth. If the two folks in a home will use the money they have in a spirit of co-operative determination to make it go as far as it will toward the big end of contented home happiness instead of constantly keeping the entire family in a ferment of envy because the money is not as much as someone else has, they will have made big strides toward making money take its real place.

While the problems are real that arise in the home because it has too little money, they are not the main problems, because even when the income increases many of the old problems still remain, and new, and even larger, ones sometimes come.

Take the question of division of the income between the two. It does not depend upon the amount of money received, but upon the attitude taken. We have known of homes where the income mounted toward thirty thousand dollars a year, and yet the wife had to beg for any money she received for her personal spending. The man had the idea that because the money was paid over to him, therefore it was his to control.

Happily, this antiquated idea is passing. Certainly we have gotten far enough now to realize that the woman who cares for the home and makes it a place of attractiveness and comfort for the man, and cares for the children as a mother, is not only earning her full share of what comes in, but is probably working more hours, and working harder

## THE FINE ART OF LIVING TOGETHER

to earn it, than the man himself, and she should not have to beg, or even ask, for her part any more than the man has to beg for his pay envelope when it is due.

We heard of a man who was so mean that he borrowed some money which his wife happened to have and when he returned it to her he gave it as a Christmas present.

The proper relationship in money matters is utter frankness and fairness between both parties. The wife is, of course, entitled to know what the husband makes. They should agree on some sort of a budget for their expenditures. We believe that the expenses should be apportioned between them and the income apportioned likewise. Both then have the experience of management and the incentive of saving and both have some element of independence.

### DEBTS

A condition which harasses many a home is that of debt. Again, while we do not underestimate the part that a small income has in relation to this situation we point out that it exists even when people have large incomes, which proves that debt is partly an attitude of mind caused by failure of the home to get the right principle on which to conduct its money affairs. Such an attitude is indicated when a new home is set up on a scale to compete with

"The Joneses" rather than set up on a scale determined by its income. The installment house has made it easy to do this. So much down and so much a week makes such an easy path to tread that the two soon find themselves caught in the web of an ever-increasing number of debt lines running out to the furniture house, the auto salesman, the clothing establishment, the victrola, radio, player-piano man, till, like the fly, they find themselves helplessly entangled.

Another reason for debt is the failure of the girl, if she is the spender, to realize the value of the dollar which the husband earns. The temptation of the charge account is one to which many a newly-wed has succumbed. This readiness to spend without realizing the meaning of it is well illustrated by the young bride who went to the bank to start an account. When asked by the cashier how much she wished to deposit to start the account she naïvely replied that she did not want that kind of an account, she wanted a charge account like the one she had at the department store.

The real solution for the home's finance is for the couple early to face a review of their assets and their possibilities in the way of income and determine that whatever happens they will live within that income. "\$21 a week income and \$20 a week outgo is heaven; \$21 a week income and \$22 a week outgo is hell," someone has said. But to



## THE FINE ART OF LIVING TOGETHER

live within an income means definite planning and definite budgeting of expenditures. The discipline of a budget and a careful study as to how to live within it is one of the best courses in home management that a young couple can have. No other experience can compare with its value. If a home is started on the plan of living within its income it is headed for financial stability. If it starts on a basis that cannot be maintained on its income it is headed for heartache and a financial crash. The young couples who in their wedding, their honeymoon and their first few months set a pace that they can never maintain are like some river boats in the West that have whistles so big that when the whistle blows the engine stops; so these couples make more noise by their first expenditures than they could ever maintain by any financial steam that they could generate. It is easy for young people to rise in their scale of expenditures. It is difficult to go down.

### ADVERSITY

Let us take time here to enlarge upon an element in this matter to which we made reference in the earlier part of the chapter, namely, the necessity of keeping money as a servant lest it take with it when it goes in times of adversity more than we can afford to let it take. And times of adversity are bound to come. No home lives on a constantly expanding salary. Not only does the income stop

## MONEY—MASTER OR SERVANT?

growing but at times it stops entirely. When the man loses his position or when hard times come, wages decline, and savings are used up, then it is that the folly of letting money be our master is shown up in all its tragic clearness.

If it is the central source of our happiness, then its decline wrecks the home, but if it is our servant, then it affects us only in part. As we can depend on it less, we tend to call on other resources more. At least, reverses have meant to many a home a new exploration of other values. And how many other values we can find! The spirit of mutual sacrifice, of willingness to adjust, of determination to make the best of things, to let the Christian grace of good cheer and courage shine forth, all these have been developed in some homes in times of hardship. It was Shakespeare who wrote, "Sweet are the uses of adversity, which, like the toad ugly and venomous, wears yet a precious jewel in its head."

The attitude we take makes lots of difference. We can keep our attention focused all the time on what we *do not* have rather than on what we *do have*, and if so, no matter how much we receive we always feel poor. A woman I knew had this trouble: When her husband received \$1,500 a year, she always talked of what they would buy when he got \$2,000; when he got \$10,000, she was miserable because she could not have things that others had who had an income of \$50,000. Her unhappi-

ness was not dependent on money but rather on her attitude.

I knew another home where the wife said, "If you can't *have* what you *want*—*want* what you *have*." She always enjoyed to the full what she then had. She could get more joy out of a little potted flower than many millionaires' wives get out of a whole greenhouse. She taught her children to love the things they could have without pay—the sunsets, the song of the bird, the yellow of the dandelion, and the crystals of the snowflake. Her large family was happier on \$1,500 a year than the first woman and her husband were on \$10,000. Such an attitude is worth thousands of dollars to a home. It cannot purchase things but it can purchase happiness, and after all, the value of a home for us is not determined by the number of its rugs, the kind of its dishes, nor the size of its overstuffed pieces of furniture; it is determined for us by the spirit which pervades the place, that shows forth in our words, our actions, and our attitudes.

A wife cannot raise her husband's salary from \$2,000 to \$10,000, but she can help greatly toward making it worth \$10,000 in the happiness it purchases within the home walls.

If we worship money as master, it will rob us of the joy of life. How then are we to make it our servant and keep it so?

## MONEY—MASTER OR SERVANT?

### RELIGIOUS IDEALISM IS COMMON SENSE

After watching and studying this matter of the relationship of money matters to home happiness let me reiterate that I am convinced that the set of principles affording the most constructive approach to the problems involved are those principles included in the Christian teachings.

If the average young couple in their early conferences decided to take God seriously in their home and definitely set apart, first, some worthy proportion of their income from week to week in recognition of their obligation to God, investing that as wisely as possible in some of the forms of the work of His Kingdom, they would have made a move that would carry them far in a happy solution of their financial problems. This has certainly very great advantages. In the first place, this would force them to systematize and budget their expenses. To do that is to have taken a long step toward success in handling their money. In the second place it would have brought their money into the position of being the servant of a great cause rather than being their master. To make money relate itself to God, and for the sake of a great principle to definitely and consistently set aside some proportion of the income for God's work, is to take it out of the danger zone and place it forever in the zone of the helpful.

## THE FINE ART OF LIVING TOGETHER

It accomplishes a third thing; it tends to bring God regularly into that home on a fair basis. The implications of that attitude are so very real and helpful as to be beyond computation. Again, in the investment of that money for the Kingdom of God the young people will be brought into touch with great causes, great ideals, with Christian friends, with the church of Jesus Christ, and these influences will invariably prove a wholesome inspiration to them and help them to create a point of view that will be of infinite value in the proper stabilization of the home.

The Master when He was here definitely taught in one of His parables that a person proved by his ability to properly take care of his money his ability to make use of spiritual power: "He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in that which is most," was His principle. The home that honors God in its money can be trusted with the finest of life's blessings and, thank God, can, and will, vindicate His promise along this line. That this is so has been proven by millions of homes.

## *Chapter XII*

### THE ROMANCE OF PARENTHOOD

ONE of the finest touches about parenthood in the Old Testament is contained in the simple statement about Enoch, that "he walked with God after he begat Methuselah." Nothing further is added as to why this particular walk with God should have begun after the birth of the little child, but one's imagination is left free to picture in his life the same thing that has taken place in thousands of others, namely, that the coming of the little child has made the parents more conscious of God's relationship to them and their home.

And why should it not be so? Surely a human being never comes closer to the divine power as shown in creation than when it stands in the marvelous relationship of parenthood to the new-born personality. The church is being led by a perfectly natural instinct of the human heart when it places very early in the life of the new-born babe a service for the dedication of the child to God, and summons the parents to consecrate themselves to train it in the things of God. What parent has not felt in the clinging pressure of a baby's hand a message out of the infinite? The tiny one seems to have just

## THE FINE ART OF LIVING TOGETHER

come from God's presence and to bring with it the mystic atmosphere of eternity.

In a prophecy depicting a future blessed condition, and after describing groups marked by natural antagonisms, Isaiah indicated that these groups could live together in harmony because "a little child shall lead them." His words then are applicable to life today, for in so many cases it has been true that the differences of parents were adjusted and a new sense of comradeship came with the coming of the little one. God, who created us, undoubtedly knew that a home came into its glory only when it had as its center a little child, for then the two members have something to work for, something that is new, that belongs solely to them, that mingles the blood of the two, something to which their hopes and prayers can cling, something for which they can save, some great and dominating objective that makes life take a new meaning.

### CHILDLESS HOMES

However, in spite of the glory and romance of parenthood that all will admit in theory, we are living at a time when the absence of parenthood by married couples is one of the serious problems that we face. We would refer, first of all, to actual avoidance of parenthood that grows out of selfishness or exists because of the desire for freedom on the part of the wife. It should be said frankly that



## THE ROMANCE OF PARENTHOOD

married life undertaken with a definite intention of the avoidance of parenthood, because of the selfish or pleasure-loving desires of the two is a gigantic sin against the laws of nature, against the future of the race, and against the ideals of the Christian home. This is not to fail to understand the burden of sorrow which rests upon an increasing and alarming number of married couples to whom the joy of parenthood seems to be denied.

In a census taken in France of eleven millions of couples, two millions were reported childless, three millions had only one child, two millions had two children, four millions three or more. When we realize the fact that the average number of children per couple has to be 3.7 in order to maintain the race at its previous number we can easily realize why the population of France is declining. The serious situation in America is that the native American stock has a decidedly declining birth rate—the average of our birth rate being kept up by the large families of our foreign-speaking immigrants. What this means for the future of the country has been pointed out in vigorous language by students of the subject.

We pause here to commend most heartily to people who have been married long enough to make it clear that their union is not to be blessed with children of their own the solution of this problem afforded by adoption. An increasing number of

## THE FINE ART OF LIVING TOGETHER

homes find this practical and it is a blessing beyond measure both to the home and to the child so taken.

### THE ONE-CHILD FAMILY

The limitation of the family to one should be carefully weighed by the people who today feel that one child is enough. Certain things ought to be considered. Not only is it in question because the family of one fails to do the home's share toward the propagation of the race, but because of the child itself. A child raised as the only one in a family is placed under a very serious handicap. One of the great functions of a home is to socialize the child. When a babe is born it is naturally a mass of selfish instincts. Through its contacts with its fellows it develops the social instincts and these contacts create the necessity of limiting its rights in view of the rights of others. Where a child lives among brothers and sisters the obligation of the home to contribute this element to its education is accomplished naturally. Where a child lives alone the danger that the home will fail in this field is just as obvious.

The excuse often given today that because of the cost of rearing children we cannot ordinarily afford more than one or two is not as genuine an argument as is oftentimes supposed. It is true that in certain other countries children are financial assets because they are made to work along produc-

## THE ROMANCE OF PARENTHOOD

tive lines, while in America we have reversed this idea. Here we tend to discourage the expectation of the child's producing anything for the support of the family. While the theoretical values of this conception are perfectly obvious and the right of the child to play and to avoid work that will limit his physical growth and his future development is admitted, we may in our experimentation with this new idea be going altogether too far in the opposite direction. It is a grave question whether children are not hurt more today in many American homes by the effort of their parents to place no burden of obligation upon them than they used to be limited by the placing of too great responsibilities upon them.

It is also a very open question whether families that now restrict parenthood to one child on the basis that they cannot afford more would not produce better citizens if they spent on two children the same amount of money now spent on one. One cannot avoid the feeling that oftentimes the extravagant expenditures made by certain parents on their children tend to produce in them selfish and extravagant tastes with the result that a very unwholesome and oftentimes un-American type of personality is produced.

The argument that the care of three or four children may be too heavy a burden on a mother's time is often advanced as the reason for a small

## THE FINE ART OF LIVING TOGETHER

family, but many a mother has found to her surprise that the actual care of two or three little children was not by any means proportionately greater than the care of one child. Children help to entertain each other and one child ties the mother in almost as much as three or four. Unquestionably a larger family develops the children more. As they grow they are a source of joy and strength to the parents. A larger number of children make possible a family life that is richer through the lifetime of that entire generation. These reasons as well as the arguments from the racial and national point of view would seem to be worthy of careful consideration by our younger American parents.

### BOTH NUMBERS AND QUALITY

However it is not simply more parenthood but better parenthood we need. It is tragic when we stop to realize how many times parenthood is assumed to automatically carry with it sufficient knowledge to make it a success. People who would not expect to know how to build a bridge or to run a typewriter or balance a set of books or even to raise chickens without careful study and preparation will assume that because they have the possibility and right of parenthood in wedlock they therefore have the knowledge essential to the rearing of a child. The abject ignorance of even the

## THE ROMANCE OF PARENTHOOD

physical care of children on the part of young fathers and mothers is a shocking thing. It is the testimony of physicians that in this nation approximately 150,000 infants are sacrificed yearly because of the ignorance, carelessness and neglect of parents, and thousands more live lives physically and sometimes mentally limited because of the same lack on the part of those who bore them.

But if there is ignorance in the care of a child's physical and mental life there is even more often a lack of preparation for wise dealing with developing personalities. The attitude is so often taken that children are hard to manage, and it is so hard to understand them. It might be a fair thing for us as parents to recognize that the children have as much difficulty living with us as we have living with them. If we could see ourselves from the child's viewpoint how inconsistent and ogre-like we must appear. At times the very things for which we punish them we complacently proceed to do ourselves. A good corrective for our point of view might be applied by asking ourselves, "How would we like to be fathers or mothers to ourselves?"

There is, today, such a mass of usable information placed at the disposal of any parent in regard to child psychology, and the physical, mental and spiritual training of childhood that parents can find little defense for ignorance along these lines. But

## THE FINE ART OF LIVING TOGETHER

with all the theoretical material at hand in these areas we shall never get away from the need of plain common sense in the handling of our children. We must take time to know them and to love them; there is no substitute for this. Both father and mother must pay this price. For parents to bring children into the world and then put the time that is needed for rearing them rightly into bridge parties, club life and other adult pleasures, leaving the children to grow up uncultured by the love and presence of those who brought them into the world, is as culpable, yes, more culpable, than for a person to accept money from an employer and never do his work; more culpable, because in the latter case the employer can defend his own rights and dismiss the employee, but the child is little and helpless and has no redress.

While there are parents who are willfully and carelessly ignorant of the best that modern information can offer them in the rearing of their children, there are plenty of others who have become enamored of the new-fangled methods of child-raising and have practically abandoned common sense and turned the child into an experiment station and the nursery into a laboratory for the testing out of each new psychological vagary that comes to their attention. The absurdities of some of these extremists are satirized by the poet:

## THE ROMANCE OF PARENTHOOD

The antiseptic baby and the prophylactic pup  
Were playing in the garden when the bunny am-  
bled up.

They looked upon the creature with a loathing undis-  
guised;

It wasn't disinfected, it wasn't sterilized.

They said it was a microbe and the hotbed of disease,  
So they steamed it in a vapor of a thousand odd de-  
grees.

They froze it in a freezer that was as cold as banished  
hope

And washed it with permanganate and carbolated soap.  
In sulphurated hydrogen they steeped its wiggly ears,  
They trimmed its frisky whiskers with a pair of hard-  
boiled shears.

They donned their rubber mittens and they took it by  
the hand

And elected it a member of the fumigated band.

There is not a microscopus in the garden where they  
play;

They bathe in pure iodoform a dozen times a day;  
They each imbibe his rations from a hygienic cup,  
The bunny and the baby and the prophylactic pup.

One cannot help but pity the child from such a  
home as much as one from the home of the other  
extreme.

In progressive education there is a revolt against  
the autocracy of our older method of instructing  
our children, particularly against the idea of forc-  
ing them to obey like automatons. Over against  
our assumption of wisdom and final authority, they  
stress the value of the child's individual personal-



## THE FINE ART OF LIVING TOGETHER

ity; its right of self-expression, and the things we can learn from the child. How proper this revolt is and the values to be gained by a right use of these conceptions we will certify as quickly as any other. But we are convinced that many parents who have not the slightest idea of the real questions involved have taken these new ideas as an excuse for concluding that they should not attempt to make their children learn obedience or control their selfish desires in the least. The result is bad in two ways. It produces a selfish, unrestrained and almost anarchistic type of child, the kind of material out of which criminals are made. It also furnishes an alibi for lazy and selfish parents who do not want to exert themselves to curb the child's will nor take time from their own selfish pleasures to train the child as it deserves. It costs to rear children rightly, and parents are responsible to the child, to the State and to God for paying that price.

### "THE NURTURE AND ADMONITION OF THE LORD"

"Enoch walked with God after he begat Methuselah." We do not know what Enoch had been prior to that time in his relationship to God, but this Scripture is right logically and spiritually. If there ever is a time when people need to seek wisdom of God it is when as parents they have brought into the world a new soul that is to begin, under their tuition, its journey into eternity. It is hard enough

## THE ROMANCE OF PARENTHOOD

for me to see how any individual would be willing, without God's help, to make the experiment of steering his *own* soul through the tumultuous experiences of life with its great implications for eternity, but it is almost unthinkable to me that parents in these days, knowing the dangerous nature of the environment in which the child is to carry on its existence, can assume the responsibility of the guidance of that child without the help and counsel of God.

People recognize this. Over and over again in my ministry I have found young parents who had drifted away from God and the church during young manhood and womanhood, who had even been somewhat indifferent in the days of early wedlock but who have turned back to God with the coming of a little child. We all recognize, whenever we are fair, that no soul can manage its own career with its own knowledge as well as if it added to such knowledge the wisdom and counsel of its Creator. We have never trodden this path of life before; we will never tread it again. The three score and ten years of human experience that some will have are altogether too short to spend much of the time along wrong trails, and human life "sets" so early into hard forms that we naturally want those molds fashioned with the wisdom that is Eternal. Common sense should make us hesitate to have our

children take any chance that they will have no help from above in their great adventure.

If any young parents whose eyes fall upon these words have ventured so far in the conduct of their home and the guidance of their children without taking counsel from the Master and seeking the guidance of His spirit, let me enter an appeal just now that for the sake of their children they turn to Him who said, "Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the Kingdom of heaven," and dedicate their little ones and consecrate themselves to the most earnest seeking of the Christian way of life for themselves and those who call them parents.

This is a complex age. It has never been easy to live a good life. In our judgment it is not getting easier, but whether that is so or not, we would not feel that we had played fair by our children if we had refused because of our stubbornness to put them in touch with the most wholesome body of teachings, the most majestic personality, the most gracious source of spiritual guidance, that the great God has given for our aid. Let us, too, walk with God for our children's sake—we need it and they need it.

## *Chapter XIII*

### KEEPING GOD IN FAMILY LIFE

WE hear it said very often in these days that the old family altar has disappeared. In our day, hurried as it is and with its divergent interests for different members of the family, it may not be entirely possible for us to maintain the family altar in exactly the same form in which it used to be maintained, but we need have no hesitation in saying that if we cannot maintain in our modern life something that for our generation will give us as real a sense of God at the heart of the home as the old family altar did for the previous generation, we will pay a high price for our failure.

According to the old conception the father was the priest of the home. He it was who gathered the members of the family in a quiet moment of family worship. Usually he read with them some great passage of God's work; sang with them one of the hymns with its message of faith, and led them, or was led by them to the throne of God in prayer. A picture based upon this family altar tradition in the Scottish homes has been made almost immortal in "Cotter's Saturday Night," and is one of the noblest ideals of Christian home life pre-

## THE FINE ART OF LIVING TOGETHER

served for us, and thousands of us can bear tribute to an institution of this sort in our paternal home as being the creator of many of the finest impressions that came to us. In the prayers of my father and mother I came to feel the presence of the personal Christ speaking through them to my boyish soul, and in the times of my temptation the memory of their prayers was a veritable wall of defense. My mother testified in her later years that in the prayers we children offered on Sunday mornings, according to the usual custom, she found access to our inner souls. Our prayers so revealed the struggles that were going on within us that she was then able in her tactful way to bring to us a sense of her spiritual comradeship in the fight we were making.

### A QUESTION OF VALUES

Susannah Wesley, finding time even when the mother of seventeen children to often sit down alone with each child and counsel with him or her about the great things of God, is the explanation of such men as Charles and John Wesley.

In our day we consider that we are so busy, so distracted by different pressing engagements, that there is no time for the home to become quiet for this mood of reverential worship. But what of the comparative value of the things that we are taking as a substitute for this quiet time of family worship? If it is father's business, or mother's social

## KEEPING GOD IN FAMILY LIFE

engagements, or sister's friends or brother's athletics, let us point out that the spiritual part of life is a real part—as real as the physical and the mental, and a balanced view of life must recognize this. If it is worth the time of the home to provide for the physical and mental development of its members, it is not only worth as much but it is as genuine an obligation to provide for the spiritual growth. This cannot be postponed to some later time with the expectancy that present lack can be made up by future plenty.

The time to furnish spiritual culture to a personality is when that personality is young. If it is left out then, ordinarily it cannot be put in adequately any more than cement can be put into concrete after the stone and sand and gravel are poured into the mold. Parents who create souls must see that those souls are not starved but given food from the great source of spiritual nutrition. Whatever price is necessary to this end ought to be paid. Ordinarily if this price is not paid another price in terms of heartache and disappointment will have to be paid.

## WHAT WE REALLY WANT

It is one thing, however, to admit this necessity and another thing to obtain it, and practice it. The real thing which we are after undoubtedly is to make the children feel as they grow that God is a

reality, that He is the great unseen friend and guide, and that daily attitudes which are induced by an honest attempt to be a sincere disciple of Jesus are sensible and healthy, and will produce the most wholesome home life, and work out best in all our relationships. Undoubtedly, this way of life which we may designate as the religious way is imparted to the child because the father and mother have it, and not simply because they talk about it. When they do talk about spiritual things, children must feel their sincerity. Such parents may not know all the theological terms, but the child will get something essentially real from their lives when they have it, or will soon detect pretense or sham on their part if the attempts at religion are merely those of form or words.

Parents can discover in this matter of the spiritual culture of their children not so much an obligation as an opportunity, if they will look upon their homes as a laboratory in which they are experimenting with growing life in its relation to that most subtle and powerful factor in life, spiritual resource. They may find that they themselves will learn an infinite amount as they try to rethink their own ideas, so they can impart them to young minds. When older people deal with this subject, they should always use language which is easily understood by the child, remembering how unstilted and simple was the language used by Jesus



## KEEPING GOD IN FAMILY LIFE

when he taught his disciples about even the most profound spiritual truths.

In no sense should religion be thought of as a mold into which a child is pushed. The experience of teaching children religion should be a mutual experiment in learning to live life at its full as God our Father would have it. Goodness should not be presented as something we must do for fear of being punished by God, but the child should come to see that God wants it for us because He wants the best for His children. An abundant literature for the guidance of young fathers and mothers in this area now exists and can be gotten through the channels suggested in the Appendix of this book.

### WORSHIP AIDS

Within the home itself there are a certain number of habitual recurring experiences which suggest the idea of God and the desirability of living under the gracious spirit of Christ-likeness. Grace at the table, for instance, can be an acknowledgment of gratitude and thus develop a recognition of His presence in the moment when the family gets together. Thus it may easily be one of the occasions of spiritual importance. It is perfectly true that it can also sink to the level of a repetition of meaningless words to which no one gives much thought. We would suggest here that if we use a

Grace such as a verse of Scripture or other repeated Graces that there be frequent occasions when the parents try to find what the words signify to the child. Possibly a better way, as soon as children are able to do it, is to suggest that they make up a Grace of their own, or that they choose a verse from the Bible or a verse of a hymn which may be sung. This would make the whole matter much more real to the child, and in all probability more vital to the older people, too.

Prayers should not be thought of as a means of getting something, nearly so much as an expression of gratitude for life, for love, and the beauties of nature, and for His bountiful goodness. Actually prayer is communion and an attempt to seek God's point of view, infinitely more than it is an attempt to get God to see our point of view.

Parents will also want to watch that the idea of God they create in a child's mind is not a fixed anthropomorphic conception. This danger is natural because the child when it begins its thinking about God, ordinarily pictures Him in the form of some well known person, possibly the father or the minister. Slowly, however, the concept of God is enlarged. By walks under the stars at night, among the trees and growing things, or on a hill top where the child can see a sunset, he can soon be taught that goodness, beauty, graciousness, and the ideas associated with God are things of the spirit, not

located in one spot or one person, but existing in and through all of the life round about us, and these speak to us of the Unseen Power whose blessing we seek and whose strength is ours to use.

The habit of good-night prayers said by the child at the mother's knee or after a story by the father might become the most powerful formative influence in a growing life. Some specialists in psychology hold that the last thing which a child has in mind before it goes off to sleep will be the dominating idea which will affect its subconsciousness during the night. If there is even a partial truth in this idea, it can easily be seen how important are those closing moments of the day. It is a tragedy if the father and mother both abdicate this privilege, and utilize that time for their dinner 'parties and social events. So many children today are left at that time to the maid or allowed to listen to the so-called "bedtime stories" of the radio, which often feature some hair-raising experience, or even make a hero of some person whose code of life is far removed from the very ideal the parents admit in theory they hold for their children. Fathers and mothers who for lack of a constructive use of that hour allow such tales to dominate the little one's dreams, must recognize that they are by their negligence doing something to the child infinitely more far-reaching than they can now understand.

## THE FINE ART OF LIVING TOGETHER

### WHERE THE CHURCH COMES IN

It stands to reason that parents who are looking for successful co-operation in achieving religious ends for their children will naturally take advantage of the group teaching afforded by their church. We say their church because the perverted idea which we sometimes have today that religious instruction is primarily an obligation of the church, and only secondarily that of the parents is greatly misleading. This matter is first a function of the home, and its successful conclusion means much more to the home itself than it does to the church. The normal situation, therefore, is for the parent to seek the help of the church, rather than for the church to urge a responsibility upon the parent.

It is obvious that any effective use of the church to this end is closely related to the attitude of the parents toward that organization. Early in married life the two young people should have thought through their church relationship, and if within the bounds of sincerity and conviction should certainly be within the same church. The effect upon children of a divided church loyalty is usually that either religion becomes a subject of controversy or, as a compromise, nobody in the family becomes very much interested in any corporate religious group.

The most important single day in the week in

the matter of spiritual education is Sunday. This is the day when both school and business stop, and parents are able to shape the way the day shall be spent, particularly is this true when the children are quite small. The tendency of our time to turn the day over to pleasure or even to use it purely for rest is a false lead for which we are steadily paying a bigger and bigger price. The day was originally conceived for the purpose of spiritual culture, if it is used for that it will be because the home throws its weight on that side of the scale. Rest and recreation there undoubtedly will be, but Sunday is the one day when spiritual culture should take first place. "Keep Sunday for the great things of the soul" is good advice, and if we use it simply for more of the same thing which comes on the other six days of the week or what is even worse have no constructive use for it at all, we have ourselves to blame if the values which inhere in spiritual culture do not become a part of our children's lives.

In a family where musical gifts are present, the singing of hymns together on Sunday afternoon or at other frequent times may be a source of splendid spiritual culture as well as a developer of family unity.

The habit of church going by both parents and children is in itself the putting of an emphasis upon the place of worship and the seeking of God

in group relationships which makes a very deep impression on the child. Just as definitely if the parents do not go, and do not expect the child to go, the child normally draws the conclusion that religion is a matter of indifference and is on the sidelines of life.

This whole matter falls as much on the shoulders of the father as the mother. The idea which some men have that they can turn it over to their wives is fallacious, particularly in the case of boys. We are so constructed that in early childhood we look upon our parents as heroes and heroines. The boy believes that his father is the best and the finest man who walks. Each one of us men, when we were boys, boasted about our fathers in this fashion. In a profound sense this hero worship period of a boy's life is the father's great chance to impress deeply upon his boy the things which he wants him to put first. The attempt on the part of a father to buy religious attitudes in his boy at the price of a few cheap words when he himself will not do the things which exemplify religion in his own life, is unworthy of any parent.

#### TO WHOM SHALL THEY GO?

Where shall our young people gain the spiritual strength to think clearly and live cleanly in life's tumultuous days and in this confused moral time? Where shall our young people gain the great spir-

itual contacts that shall enable them to wisely guide themselves and their children after them and avoid the pitfalls into which our policy of self-expression and feminine liberty could so easily drag us today. Where else, if not in the Christian home? Where shall our boys find the moral fiber and spiritual vision to enable them to be tall men, sun crowned, who will live cleanly in public action and in private thinking? We cannot purchase it with money. We cannot rely simply upon education. We cannot turn to social culture. We cannot hope that the church, with its one and possibly two hours a week in contact with our children can adequately supply them these great spiritual resources. The answer to this need must be made by the American home. If our children are to find the spiritual resources for their day and generation, we must face again our obligation to put God at the heart of our homes. If we are to have an altered family, an altered politics, an altered world, altered toward the will of God on earth, it will be because in that great institution that we call the home we erect an altar that in some real sense places God at the center.



## *Chapter XIV*

### CAN LOVE DIE?

IF people really love each other, can they ever fully lose that love? Evidence seems to indicate that love can, and sometimes does die. All homes in America, theoretically, are started on the basis of protestations of love. All marriage ceremonies contain such a statement. In spite of these professions, however, so-called love does not seem able to stand the strain of wedlock, and an ever-increasing number of homes go to pieces. This is not to say that the writer in speaking in this way of the American home ignores the fact that it is the homes that get wrecked about which we hear. It is good newspaper copy to write up home troubles, particularly when these troubles are aired in court, and it is not necessarily such good copy to tell about a home that is happy. Therefore, at times we get a distorted impression of our American home life. The newspapers are not usually the best medium through which to look at life. The millions of happy, contented, American homes, from which are coming the young men and women who form the backbone of this nation, have comparatively little said about them, but they are the forces that make our world go round.

## CAN LOVE DIE?

### HOME WRECKAGE

Giving this fact due emphasis, however, should not prevent our facing fairly the increasing scandal of our divorce situation. According to United States government statistics, the number of divorces granted during a given year as compared with the number of marriages concluded during that same year has increased from 5.5 per one hundred in 1887 to 16.4 in 1935. In 1935 also the number of divorces granted in a year reached an all time high of 218,000. On the average, therefore, for every six marriages performed one divorce will be granted.

Official figures for 1931 show that Maine had one divorce for every 4.6 marriages, and Ohio one for every 3.2. The ratio for the same year in Oregon was one to three; in Wyoming one to 1.8; and in Nevada one to 1.4. Occasionally the number of divorces per year in Nevada actually surpasses the number of marriages. In these five states during the years 1927-1931, marriages decreased by 11,845, but divorces increased by 1,330.

A comparison of the records of the United States with those of other countries shows clearly the rapidity with which our divorce mills grind. While we were granting more than 200,000 separations in 1929, Canada granted 816, or one for every 246 here. In a recent year the number of divorces per 100,000 of the population in Belgium was 40;

France and Switzerland 50; Denmark and Germany 60; Japan 92; the United States 136.

No matter how much may be said in favor of the necessity of some divorces, we cannot have an increasing breaking up of homes without jeopardizing society. The home is a fundamental social unit and its increasing disintegration must cause us all serious concern. We should remember the Romans, and realize that with them divorce was certainly an accompaniment of degeneracy.

"In the early period of the Roman republic woman was highly respected as a matron. For 520 years, the historian Dionysius declares, there was no divorce in Rome. During that time the republic reached the pinnacle of prosperity and stability. But as one result of wars of conquest and consequent multiplication of slaves, three forms of marriages came to be adopted. First, a form for patricians, which could not be dissolved; second, a purely civil contract; third, a marriage which could be formed or ended at the will of either party. The last named at length drove out the others, so that in Rome where for half a millennium divorce had scarcely ever occurred, marriage, in turn, became practically unknown. Cicero put away Terentia to obtain a new dowry. Pompey divorced Mucia. Caesar divorced Pompeia. Cato loaned his wife to Hortensius, and took her back a wealthy widow when the old man died. Maecenas

## CAN LOVE DIE?

changed wives frequently. Women likewise divorced their husbands." Rome had easy divorce and paid for it apparently with degenerate family life and national disintegration.

Unquestionably one method of helping solve the problem would be the creating of better laws governing marriage and divorce; particularly we need more uniform laws. With our 48 different divorce laws today it is entirely possible for a man to be legally married in one state and yet prosecuted for bigamy if he moves to another. Children who are legitimate in one state are illegitimate if the parents move to another.

Undoubtedly, too, our marriage and divorce laws should be rethought in the light of the unfair treatment accorded to the woman. The old Roman law said a wife whether patrician or slave had no legal rights. The old Welsh law gave a man a right to give his wife three blows with a broomstick on any part of the body except the head. The English law said the same but limited the stick to the length of her husband's forearm and the size of his little finger. Within a hundred years, in England, the method of divorce was for a man to put a halter around his wife's neck, lead her to the open market and sell her to another man; however this right was limited by the clause that a man's wife must not be sold more than once by the same husband, the price of the wife must not be less than 50 cents,

and the halter must be a new one and placed around her neck. As late as 1881, in a court in England in giving evidence that she was duly married to the second man a woman said, "He sold me for 20 shillings and I have it in black and white with the date upon it." Our laws in regard to the rights of women still bear many marks of the injustice and unfairness that we have inherited from the past. But no amount of recodifying our laws or making them more uniform or more stringent in regard to divorce is going to be a real cure for the evil of the broken home and the death of love. Homes are made and broken by folks and not by laws. Holding people together by the iron clamp of a legal law after love is dead will not solve the problem we are facing. We need to work not only at the divorce laws, but in building the kind of homes where divorce is not desired. Prevention is better than cure. If love gets its opportunity, we will have little use for the courts.

Can love die? Love can die. It can die when it is young; oftentimes it does. We need to study the infant mortality tables here as well as elsewhere and realize that we must give it as fair a chance to grow as we do a baby. There is more than poetry in the picture of love as a little babe. It is born as an infant. To grow it must be carefully nurtured and developed. It must not be overloaded and strained at once or it will grow up crippled. Mar-

## CAN LOVE DIE?

ried couples oftentimes seem to take it for granted that the love they profess can stand any load; therefore they proceed to put strains upon it which love, even in maturity, should never be forced to bear.

## LOVE CAN GROW

Love grows by the development of the things that first produced it. The courtesy and attractiveness and interest of courtship are the things that are constantly needed. A woman who attempts to hold her husband by depending on the fact that he must now do certain things for her because they are married, and does not attempt to make herself attractive to him, falls back upon a bad policy which, if pursued, is calculated to kill love in the heart of her husband. A man whose actions are boorish around the home or who deliberately pursues a course of action that creates in the mind of his wife suspicion as to his fidelity is pursuing a policy that will tend to kill love.

In our day and generation one of the things we need to reckon with as among the most dangerous enemies of developing love is the quantity of false philosophy put forth in many of our novels, some of our photodramas, and in certain schools of thought. The modern philosophy of self-expression, when applied to the marriage relationship, has often been used merely as an excuse for the introduction of license in the place of love. The

psychology which dwells on the fearful results of a complex growing out of the repressed desires of the body has been used as an excuse for some of the most dangerous and devilish concessions being made to human lust.

What we need today in the married relationship is what business needed at the close of the first world war; namely, a recognition of the sanctity of contracts. Business men then circularized the country in an attempt to make us realize that if a man made a contract for an order of goods and lightly broke it he was undermining credit and threatening the stability of the business world. Let us say just as clearly today that when men or women enter into the contract of marriage they are under obligation to live up to their agreement. Neither has the right, just because things sometimes go worse instead of better, to sever lightly the most sacred contract ever made. If they do that, it will do for the home what the breaking of contracts threatened to do for the business world—jeopardize its entire stability. In business a man who repudiates his contracts soon loses his business standing. It ought to be so that men and women who lightly break their contract in wedlock would lose all social standing.

Love can die. But love can grow, and when the so-called "incompatibility" begins to show, and when strained relationships are created, if the two



## CAN LOVE DIE?

people, instead of spending the time in emphasizing the things that irritate each other or hunting some third party as an affinity to sympathize with them in their unhappiness, would deliberately set themselves to court each other, to shun the things that have caused irritation, and, seeking the spirit of the Master, set themselves in dead earnest to retain each other's confidence and love, they would usually find the services of a lawyer unnecessary. The services of the Master will be all that will be needed and it will be shown that love even when stunted and sickly can be nursed back into vigor and life. "Now abideth faith, hope and love, and the greatest of these is love." The longest-lived of these is love, and the one worthy of most sacrifice is love.

## *Chapter XV*

### GROWING OLD TOGETHER

"*BUT* it shall come to pass that at evening time it shall be light." This beautiful bit of ancient poetry is, in a sense, a word painting of an ideal old age. The world holds no experience finer than that which a happy married life offers. Picture a home where in youth two have plighted their love in high honor, where they have passed along life's road in happy companionship, children have come and have been reared to go forth and do a good piece of the world's work, and to found homes of their own which, in turn, become centers of blessing, and now the two older folks, enjoying a well-earned rest, happy in the love of each other, in the joy of their children and friends, move on toward the twilight and evening star, waiting till over the western hills the evening bell sounds one clear call for them. It has come to pass that for them at evening time it is light.

This is a picture of heaven on earth. It is a picture that young people should set before themselves early in life, for it is a reality that does not come by chance. The colors for this picture are not gathered quickly, they are prepared by definite

## GROWING OLD TOGETHER

plans, honest living, genuine love, and the guidance of God. Such an old age is worth paying for.

This period in life can be so barren and lonely, so filled with querulousness and heartache, or it can be filled with so much that is fine. If the two have learned to trust each other, and have learned by the grace of the Master's spirit to leave behind them their misunderstandings and the things that mar the day's task, they can keep these assets to aid them far on into a mellowed and ripe old age. There are certain things that will aid greatly in making the later years of life rich and fine instead of otherwise. From among them we select these suggestions.

First, learn to appreciate and develop the resources of each other. What a pathetic thing it is to find men and women who enthusiastically appreciate the company of others outside the home but seem almost oblivious to the resources and attractiveness of their own folks. If the two have early put their home first in their own lives, if they have not allowed all sorts of other interests to come in and crowd out their enjoyment of each other's company within the quiet of their own home, they have an asset that they can carry down to later years that will stand them in good stead.

Again, if they have learned to play together, to build up mutual interests, to both love good books, to be interested in the same type of travel, to have

## THE FINE ART OF LIVING TOGETHER

mutual friends, to feature the things which make each other happy, they have learned some of the finest pastimes for the older years.

But the loveliest thing in old age is the maintenance at full power of the gentle arts known only to lovers. These do not need to diminish with advancing years. Indeed, they rise to more sacred heights than ever before. I watched this in the life of my father and mother. As I look back at the closing years of my father's life, the one word that I would use to describe him in his home relationships was the beautiful word "Lover." He was a finer, more chivalrous and gallant lover at seventy-six than he was even in youth. The tender, protective care over Mother, which he had exercised through the years, shone in all its radiant glory in the later years. The love they both bore each other threw a halo about every moment they spent in the "little nest" where the closing years of their life together on earth were lived. Learning through early life how to be good lovers will prove of incomparable value in old age.

## TIES THAT BIND

Again, if they have become mutually interested in some service that they have rendered, and can render together for the Kingdom of God, they have a source of abiding interest and fascination for the waning years. The church in which they

have worshiped; some institution which they have helped to support; a cause they have sacrificed to further, will offer such a focus of interest.

But it is in the realm of the soul where life crowns with its richest blessing those who have learned the eternal youthfulness of spiritual power. It was a word filled with wisdom for every generation that was spoken by the Apostle when he said: "If our earthly house of this tabernacle be dissolved, we have a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." "For though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day." Where that sense of the promise of eternal fellowship abides, death is incidental. We have seen two such stand hand in hand, close beside the shore from which one soon was to set sail and heard them say "good-by" with a calm faith that there could be no permanent breaking of the family tie because it was based upon "the Father for whom the whole family in heaven or earth is named." But the knowledge of that impending journey did not cast any gloom on the later days.

But we have seen two people to whom life has meant much come face to face with that greatest adventure only to meet it with dread and horror. With no resources of the soul or vision of faith on which to rely to carry them through, when death came it left one standing on the shore, helpless in

## THE FINE ART OF LIVING TOGETHER

the midst of desolation with a feeling that life's structure was crumbling about her.

If the rare treasures of the spirit that can make growing old together a source of expanding joy are present to change the crowns of silvered hair into halos of golden glory, it will be because these treasures have been deposited daily as life has progressed and can be taken out at last in the time of need. In this faith is a secret that turns sunset to sunrise. It turns old age to youth, and changes death into a promise of immortal life. When two have built up this spiritual faith in a good Father who "will not leave them nor forsake them" but will guide them on and on and, even though separated for a time, bring them eternally together in His presence, then old age loses its terrors and eternal peace broods over the older years and life's "valley of the shadow" will hold no fear, for He will be with them.

If God is what we say He is, and we in any real sense are His children, if He has placed within us such great gifts as love, the joy of companionship, and the urge of parenthood, and if, as we are led to believe, one of His chief concerns is that we shall come into the fullest realization of life here upon earth, and by entering here into the riches of the experiences of living together through our homes, be prepared for an even larger and more entrancing experience of fellowship hereafter, then

where shall we turn except to Him, and His Revealer, Jesus Christ, to learn the spirit and methods by which we home-makers shall come into the fullest glory of the experience of love and family life? He should be its inspiration as it begins, its guide as it develops, and its glory at its consummation. Under His guidance for us all "it shall come to pass that at evening time it shall be light." God wants us to have the home we planned for, and the one He wishes for us is better than we can dream.



## APPENDIX

BECAUSE many clergymen who have desired to preach along the lines of this book have written asking for suggested material and lists of topics used, I make a few suggestions here as to these matters. The literature in this field is increasing so steadily that a bibliography prepared today will be out of date tomorrow. If a man were considering such a series of sermons I would suggest that he write first to the Committee on Marriage and the Home, the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America, 297 Fourth Avenue, New York, and ask for their latest bibliography. He should also write for suggestions to his denominational headquarters. The International Council of Religious Education at 203 N. Wabash Avenue, Chicago, could also give valuable advice.

Today a minister would get a number of books by writing to the nearest seminary library or to the public library in his town. A letter to the state university in his state will bring much useful material. The national publishing houses of the Y.M. C.A. and the Y.W.C.A. have a great deal to offer. Contemporary magazines should be clipped or filed with this in view.

Material is also constantly coming to one by ob-

## APPENDIX

servation and in conference. A notebook will soon be filled by one who is careful to note matters of interest in this field. Hardly an evening spent in society, or a day in one's own home, or even a ride on the street car, or a walk in the park, but will afford some item which will later help to illustrate thinking along this line.

I had several friends also who clipped things which they thought might be useable for me along this line, and each fall I had on hand a portfolio of clippings.

The Biblical material is equally accessible to all. I will not attempt, therefore, to list it. Suffice it to say that the Bible is filled with material and principles useful along this line.

## TOPICS FOR SERMONS

SOME of the topics I have used at different times are here listed with the thought that they may be suggestive. It is entirely probable that they have been used by others. Indeed, I do not hesitate to use a topic used elsewhere if it is the thing I want. In this, as in much of our preaching, the remark of a veteran preacher to me is in point. "Most of our work is the putting together of the pieces in a mosaic; the difference between us is in the size of the pieces we use."

### 1. TOPICS DEALING WITH THE PERIOD OF EARLY FRIENDSHIP.

"Seventeen and in Love"

"Your Friends, Assets or Liabilities?"

"The Halo Around Courtship"

"Adam Meets Eve: or, The Little Grey Home—"

"Does Flaming Youth Mean Burnt-out Homes?"

### 2. TOPICS DEALING WITH THE PERIOD BEFORE MARRIAGE.

"On How Much Can We Marry?"

"Love on Twenty Dollars a Week"

"Will She be Better or Worse?"

"Will He Qualify as a Husband?"

"What a Girl Has a Right to Expect from Her Fiancé"

## TOPICS FOR SERMONS

- "The Kind of a Girl to Marry"
- "Choosing a Mate"
- "Knowing the Right One"
- "Look Before You Leap"
- "Samson and His Courtship"
- "Ideal Love-making"

### 3. TOPICS DEALING WITH THE WEDDING CONTRACT.

- "Marriage and Money"
- "Orange Blossoms or Lemons?"
- "I Pronounce You Man and Wife"
- "Till Death Do Us Part"
- "The Unseen Guest at the Wedding"
- "The Greatest Promise in the World"
- "For Better or for Worse?"
- "For Richer or for Poorer?"
- "Whom God Hath (Not) Joined Together"

### 4. TOPICS DEALING WITH THE RELATIONSHIP OF HUSBAND AND WIFE.

- "If God Planned Your Home"
- "Have You Made Good as a Husband?"
- "How Would You Grade Yourself as a Wife?"
- "Skeletons in Family Closets"
- "The Fireside vs. the Footlights"
- "Good Things to Quarrel About"
- "The Gentle Art of Living Together"
- "Drifting into Trouble; or, Planning for Happiness?"
- "How Much Should One Stand from the Other?"
- "Striking the First Hard Currents"

5. TOPICS DEALING WITH PARENTHOOD

- "The Challenge of the Cradle"
- "The Strain of the high-school Age"
- "Guiding the Young Folks over Fool's Hill"
- "Will Your Child Break Your Pocketbook, Your Heart or Your Record?"
- "From the Cradle to Fool's Hill"
- "Some Parents I Have Met"
- "The Child's Mistake: Choosing the Wrong Parents"
- "The Cry of a Little Child"
- "A Little Child Shall Lead Them"
- "Our Chance to Change the Future"

6. TOPICS DEALING WITH THE SPECIAL RELATION OF RELIGION TO HOME LIFE.

- "The Family Altar and the Altered Family"
- "Getting the Home We Prayed For"
- "God and the Home"
- "The Church in Thy House"
- "The Master of the House"

7. GENERAL TOPICS

- "Growing Old Together"
- "Living with Our In-laws"
- "Divorce"
- "Can Love Die?"
- "The Place of the Home in Human Society"
- "Sunset and Evening Star"
- "When Sorrow Comes."















# From Friendship to Marriage

By

ROY A. BURKHART

How to make the most of friendship and marriage, and how to find happiness in boy-and-girl relationships, is the real contribution of this new book by Dr. Burkhardt. Out of his wide experience in working with thousands of young people, and at the request of the many who have been helped by him, Dr. Burkhardt has prepared this guidebook to successful married life. In straightforward style, and without dodging the issues involved, the author points out the values to be preserved and snares to be avoided in problems of such genuine significance to young people as "dates," intimacy, the engagement period, and on into married life.

"A splendid interpretation which will be read with profit by many young people."—P. R. Hayward, *Director of Young People's Work, International Council of Religious Education.*

"The most valuable book I have known for young people of today."—Dr. J. W. Wilce, *Director of Student Health Service, Ohio State University.*

HARPER & BROTHERS  
*P u b l i s h e r s*

# Books to Interest Parents

## **THE PARENTS** by *Sidonie Matsner Gruenberg*

The head of the Child Study Association of America discusses frankly and helpfully the relationship of parent and child in the world of today. "A distillation of the finest wisdom from a lifetime of superlatively fine service in the cause of richer, happier, more intelligent home life."—Dorothy Canfield Fisher.

## **MAINTAINING MANHOOD** **MAINTAINING WOMANHOOD** } by *Dr. George W. Corner*

Companion volumes which present clearly and frankly, for the information of young people, the essential facts of sex: the anatomy and physiology of the reproductive systems, sex conduct, and familiar disorders. Straightforward, untechnical, thoroughly scientific. The author is Professor of Anatomy at the University of Rochester Medical School. Illustrated.

## **PARENTS' QUESTIONS** by *the Child Study Association of America*

It is difficult to imagine a young parent alert to the new trends in child training and yet bewildered by them, who could not profit from reading this wise and wholesome book."—*Herald Tribune* "Books."

## **THE NEW BABY and How To Care For It** by *Lindsey W. Batten*

Strikingly commonsense advice from a doctor to young mothers—on pre-natal care, the diet and training of the child and the fixing of desirable habits.

## **FIRST FIVE YEARS OF LIFE** by *Dr. Arnold Gesell and others*

A broadly scientific and many-sided study of pre-school children, tracing the normal stages of development from birth through the crucially important first years. Dr. Gesell is founder and director of the Yale University Clinic of Child Development.